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Midnight Spy.



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THE
MIDNIGHT SPY,

OR, A

View of the Transactions

OF

LONDON and WESTMINSTER,

FROM

The Hours of Ten in the Evening, till
Five in the Morning ;

Exhibiting a great Variety of Scenes in

HIGH and LOW LIFE,

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Well known Nocturnal Adventurers of both Sexes.

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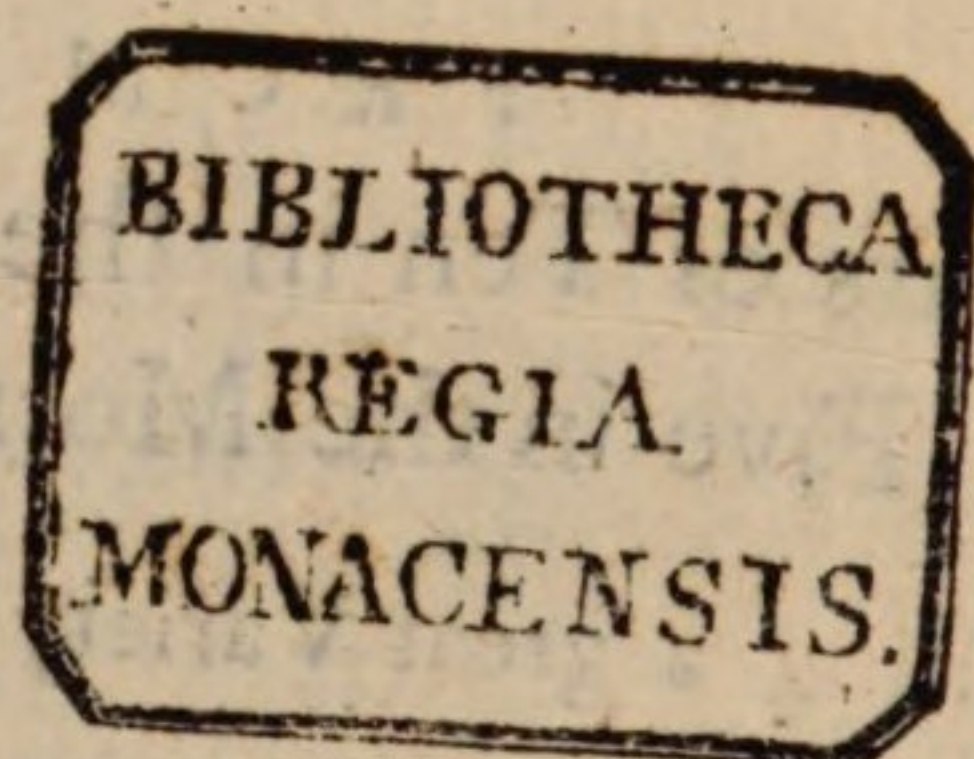
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THE
MIDNIGHT SPY,

OR,
View of the Transactions
OF

London and Westminster,



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THE MIDNIGHT-SPY.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

Shewing the Author's Plan.

NO person has a more equitable right to set up for a Moralist, than a reformed rake, nor can any depict vice in more glaring colours than a penitent debauchee; the author presumes to offer the following sheets to public notice, not doubting of their tendency both to instruct and entertain, which are the principal ends of all literary productions——
Though he blushes to acknowledge his having been present at many of

the scenes hereafter mentioned, as well as conversant with many of the characters hereafter displayed, he is certain such personal acquaintance must entitle him to allowed propriety of representation, and consequently add a sanction to his sincere endeavours in the cause of virtue, truth and justice.

He has chiefly confined his animadversions to that space of time, in which villainy too often stalks triumphant, and to those actions, which the most impious almost blush to commit in the face of the sun; because such restriction is most conducive to detect the guise of fraud, and strip the mask of sanctity from the face of hypocrisy.

To facilitate the plan, the work is ranged in distinct parts, according to the different hours, which furnish distinct scenes of action, or are devoted to peculiar amusement or improvements.——A regular progress is maintained, during the respective spaces of time throughout this extensive metropolis, and every scene wor-

thy of notice impartially described.—The principal persons in this descriptive essay, are Agrestis, and Urbanus, of whom (to elucidate the design of the work) the reader is desired to take the following anecdotes.

Agrestis was descended from a reputable family in the county of Denbeigh.—Being an only son, he was the darling of his parents, under whose immediate eye, he was trained up.—He received a genteel education at a Grammar School, and made a considerable progress in the Belles Lettres. His mind was early formed to virtue by the admonition and example of a most worthy father, enforced by the improveing conversation of a pious and learned divine, who performed the duty of six pounds per annum, and was therefore a constant guest at the old gentleman's hospitable board.

He lived several years in the enjoyment of health and plenty, happy in himself, a blessing to his parents, and a benefit to society. At length

his father being called upon to pay the debt of nature, an estate of five hundred pounds a year devolved on the son, who being now in a state of independence, became excentric in his desires, nor could rest contented within the confines of his Villa.——

Prompted by a fatal curiosity to see the world, he determined on a tour, nor could he be diverted therefrom by the tears of a disconsolate mother, or solicitations of an importunate friend.——Thus resolved, he set out for this metropolis, attended by an old trusty servant, who will make a part in our future relations, under the title of Fidelis.

After a series of adventures, attended with the loss of his health, and one half of his estate, he had resolution enough to abandon this alluring scene and retreat to his native soil, where, by industry and temperance, he repaired his fortune and constitution, and now lives to enjoy rural life as heightened by its secession from noise, vanity, and vice of every kind.

Urbanus derived his extraction from an eminent merchant in this city, was early initiated in the commercial life, and remarkable for his attachment to his father's business. As he was bred in London, he had an early opportunity of seeing its various follies, and being endowed with good sense, and great resolution, was a spectator, without being a party concerned. Urbanus was not so immersed in commerce, as to be unacquainted (which is often the case) with every thing else: he had read much, and had a very competent knowledge of men and things, being capable of discerning most minutely, the intrinsic merit of human actions.

He despised the parade of title, and the trapping of dress, esteeming honor the most glorious characteristic, and integrity the brightest orament. His greatest pleasure, and general employment was in relieving indigent virtue, supporting dejected honesty, and diffusing his bounty amongst worthy objects.

With such a disposition, he was capable of moralizing on the various

occurrences in life, as well as detecting its different impostures, and unravelling its many chicaneries.

As he delighted much in speculation, he conversed much with books and men, and visited all the different assemblies in this motley scene. From the good he imbibed enhanced ideas of virtue; from the bad he conceived a more inveterate aversion to vice.

Thus accomplished, he was completely qualified to guide the unwary and inexperienced thro' the mazes of this alluring, tho' inhospitable world, and is in every respect equal to the task we have allotted him in our little moral Drama.

Agrestis was conducted by this experienced attendant, during a series of nights, throughout the various parts of this epitome of the world.—His remarks on the different persons and things which occurred, compose the substance of this volume, which is designed as a portrait (in miniature) of life, or descriptive view of mankind under the prevalence of vice and folly.

C H A P II.

Acquaintance commenced between Agrestis and Urbanus. Brief description of the town, interspersed with remarks moral and entertaining.

URBANUS, after the fatigues of business, used frequently to take a tour from the city to St. James's park not more for the benefit of the air than the indulgence of his speculative turn of mind.

One evening as he was walking in the Birdcage-walk, he observed, seated on a bench, a country looking gentleman, a courtezan, and a man, who by his appearance, seemed to be one of those indolent infamous wretches, who live upon the wages of prostitution——Desirous of prying into the design of the two latter on the former, he pass'd them several Times, effecting not to notice them ; but at length from an hours perseverance in converse, having reason to suspect an intrigue formed against the innocent young gentleman, he called him aside and thus addressed him.

I doubt not, Sir, but you will readily pardon my abrupt behaviour when I

assure you it arises from the honest motivated of delivering you from the wiles of the most abandoned of mortals, who are capable of every villainy the infernal fiend can suggest——Your mien bespeaks you a gentleman, though from my long experience, I can easily discern you are a stranger in town, and wholly unacquainted with its numerous, tricks, and fallacies——Anxious therefore for the preservation of your health and property, I warn you to shun those persons with whom you have been so long engaged in converse, as no benefit can accrue to any gentleman, from such an acquaintance, which is rarely contracted without much prejudice, as well as never abandoned without much difficulty. Agrestis returned him thanks for the interposition, though assured him he could not from the drift of their words or behaviour apprehended any design repugnant to the laws of modesty, or honesty, as they behaved with the most officious civility, and even proffered him a lodging in their house, till he could furnish himself more agreeably to his own mind.

I presume, Sir, replied Urbanus, you are lately arrived in town, and unprovided

ed with a convenient place of residence, permit me therefore to make the same proffer ; you will find upon enquiry, I am a man of honour, and one, whose acquaintance will do you no disgrace.

The countrymen gratefully acknowledged the favour, accepted the invitation, and walked into the city with his new acquaintance, who as they passed along, thus bespoke him—That men and women, gay and polite as they appear to be, are the very dregs of mankind. The one a common prostitute, the other an arrant gambler, who in conjunction, lay in wait to seduce the unwary—If they had prevailed on you to accompany them, they would either have drawn you into play, or wheedled you into amorous embraces, or if neither of those arts succeeded, would have ill-treated you under some false and scandalous pretence ; it is almost impossible for any person that is cajoled into their trammels, to escape without much detriment both in person and property. Surely, said Agrestis, 'tis not common for persons here to assume an appearance thus different from their characters ? What ! is this London world in a mask ? How then are we to judge of mankind ?

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if persons of such a genteel appearance are capable of such dirty actions, what must we think of those whose very garb denotes infamy? Garb denotes infamy! (returned Urbanus with a smile of contempt) mistaken, though general notion! What do you think that a bit of lace constitutes dignity, or that merit is centered in brocade? Experience my friend will teach you the contrary, and evince, agreeable to Doddsley's observation, that knaves here very often appear in embroidery, and the honest man in a thread bare coat.—Here they were interrupted by supper being introduced, which finished, Urbanus, according to promise, re-assumed the discourse, and Agrestis was agreeably entertained the remainder of the evening with a general description of the town.

The motley scene I am about to describe, may be justly deemed a world by itself, as it comprehends more singularities, than the universe besides.—If one grand idea could represent to the mind the numerous transactions of this seat of noise, hurry, and impertinence, we could not entertain it without astonishment.—It contains a jumble of high and low, rich and poor, honest men and knaves, all pursuing different objects, according

to their different dispositions. It is a seat of uninterrupted action, and like the perpetual motion, never standing still.

—— At court they are striving, for titles, places and pensions; here prevail, in the highest degree, vanity, pride and dissimulation, nor can the face hardly be considered as the index of the mind—— In the courts of judicature, you may hear long harangues to little purpose, modesty and good sense overcome by froth and affrontery, and honest men bullied out of their property by rogues in office. —— In the church there is great contention for pluralities, but little zeal for the honour of religion; much talk of charity but little practice; long prayer, but little devotion; great preferment with little merit; and much merit without reward.

In the city, the wheels of commerce roll perpetually; in this centure of business you may observe, persons of all degrees, employments and professions—— Here the different objects perplex the gazing eye, and ravish the astonished mind, while the ears are stunned with incessant cries, —— The streets are so many veins wherein the people circulate.

Their actions succeed one another with such rapidity, that they begin an hundred things before they have finished one, and finish a hundred others before they can properly be said to have begun them.

They are incapable both of attention and patience, and hardly allow themselves time to hear or see, but like moles, work in the dark, and undermine each other.

Now, said Urbanus to his friend, is not this medley a pleasant confusion, and a perfect amusement? The astonished Countryman replied, without doubt the indigested chaos was but an imperfect representation of this congregated huddle. But what most amazes me, is, to hear them speak all languages, when by their actions and countenances they seem to talk of nothing but traffic.

That is the case, returned Urbanus, and if you possess but money, you may possess the whole product of nature, and be furnished here in a short time with its various commodities; for here, to use the vulgar phrase, "Money, and money alone makes the mare to go."

We have here, continued the Describer, divers kinds of walks, in some of which you go to see and be seen, and
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in others to be felt, heard, and understood.

The Park is the rendezvous of the quality and inhabitants of the western quarter of the town, and the Mall in Moorfields, for the recreation of the city and mercantile part.

In those places, and others of the like kind, persons assemble to see and be seen, censure and be censured: the ladies to shew their art in dress, and fops to expose their folly, observe the beauties, and fix on a toast for the approaching evening.

Here are also to be seen a number of taudry misses, lying in wait for a fool of fortune, or an unexperienced countryman ; in short, the walks exhibit a motley scene of vanity, folly and knavery.

This concluded Urbanus, is a brief hint of the state of this metropolis ; but as a design to accompany you on a tour through it, at those times when most of its tricks are glaringly displayed, I have omitted many remarks, which will occur in the course of our perambulation ; and for this night take my leave with wishing you a good repose.

C H A P. III.

A City Tavern and Coffee-House described.

ACCORDING to agreement, Urbanus and Agrestis, set out about nine the following evening, for their proposed tour through London and Westminster. As they passed through Cornhill, the Countryman observed a company of grave gentlemen enter a certain tavern, and prompted by curiosity, desired his companion to follow them. When they approached the bar, a dressed-up women started up, and by hastily pulling the bell, alarmed two or three nimble-footed fellows, one of whom immediately shewed a room; but Urbanus, finding on enquiry, that he was acquainted with the major part of the company, by sending up word, was introduced, together with his friend, to the club of venerable cits.

After many formal compliments, they took their pipes, and began to discourse in select parties, on different topics. Some

Some vindicated the property of the Stamp Duties on our America Colonies, while others as vehemently opposed them. Some laid down plans for the good of trade in general, while, others proposed schemes for the benefit of an incorporated society of merchants in particular. Another recommended Mr. deputy Doublejug, as a worthy candidate for the next gown that should be vacant in his ward, while his neighbour proposed an important hint to be laid before the next meeting of Common Council. A patriotic old gentleman in particular exclaimed against the city's too servile compliance with several late transactions, absolutely repugant to the liberty of free born Britons, and instanced Mr. Alderman Pickle as unworthy of his dignified office.

This declaration raised much dispute in the midst of which were introduced two excellent capons, a couple of ducks, &c. and a profound silence soon succeeded; our politicians being as much attached to their appetites, as the good of their country.

The two gentlemen having made their compliments to the grave assembly departed, and the Citizen, as they passed towards Temple-Bar, entertained his country friend

friend with some remarks on the tavern and company.

The house we have just left, said he, is frequented by the most respectable personages in the city, and celebrated for the most delicate provision and choicest wines. Thousands are daily circulated therein, and guineas are as trite there as halfpence in one of our modern ginshops, glossed over with the title of Coffee-house.

Hither repair many incorporated societies to settle the most important concerns both national and personal, as well as many gentlemen who reside in country places, to refresh themselves after the fatigue of transacting business on the Royal Exchange.

In short, for politics and guttling this house can challenge the whole metropolis, and in expending provisions, I believe it exceeds any two within the bills of mortality.

The company to which I introduced you is composed of a set of gentlemen, who have acquired competent fortunes in trade, and being almost superannuated, are perpetually talking, tho' seldom to the purpose. They are of the number of those persons, who arrogate to themselves
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a precedence from a consciousness of possessing ten or twelve thousand pounds, and are really actuated by the most sinister motives.

If a person younger or poorer than themselves presumes to contradict one of their absurd propositions, they construe it into the height of impertience, and pronounce it deserving the severest chastisement. They are in general as dogmatical, as erroneous, and as most of them are illiterate, they derive no other consequence in point of credibility, than what arises from their possessions.

That red faced old codger, who was so strenuous in vindication of the stamp duties in America, is at this time tampering with an indigent knave in office, to procure a post for his son : and his opponent is a frequent guest at the table of a certain alderman eminent for his boldly asserting the liberty of the subject.

The old fellow with the plodding countenance, and square-toe shoes, from an humble porter, is arrived at the dignity of Common Council Man ; and is respected for his extraordinary knowledge in commerce.

Did you observe the man in the full-bottomed wigg, who so warmly pro-
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posed as a candidate for the next vacant gown ; his son makes love to the Deputy's daughter, and he is elevated beyond himself with the prospect of so honourable an alliance.

If any of the company possessed a degree of sense or impartiality, in my opinion, it is the dry cuss, who made some pertinent remarks on the variable turn of mind which some people evince ; at one time bellowing out, like Sempronius for their country, and at another, holding up their hands, for measures destructive of the very foundation of liberty.

I remember the man he mentions as unworthy the honour conferred on him by his fellow-citizens, a fanatic in the country party, whereas through some family connections, he has since been a cat's paw to the court.

This company indeed, as well as most others, is an epitome of the world mortally considered, which seldom appears to be what it really is ; and while a fair and spacious outside is maintained, every thing mean, base and sordid lurks within.

By this time they had reached a certain Coffee-house, in a street near St. Paul's. Come, says the Citizen to his friend:

friend, let us step in, as you are a stranger to the town, this place will afford you some diversion.

When they were seated, they began to take a view of the company: do you observe, said Urbanus, the old Sophister, who is quaffing in that corner, and looking stedfastly at the candle; he's a famous projector, a member of the Royal Society, and was principally concerned in bringing the Weather-glass to perfection. He has a great many oddities, rises, eats, plots, and sleeps at precise hours. He is also a great antiquarian: he tells you of some rarities he possesses of a very extraordinary nature, deposited in a closet of curiosities that exceeds the Museum. He pretends to have the pipe, out of which Sir Walter Raleigh first smoaked tobacco, the beak of one of the eagles that were preserved in the ark, a piece of St. Paul's cloak, and part of the lanthorn with which Diogenes sought thro' Athens at noon, to find an honest man. These and other improbabilities he imposes as truths on the weak and credulous.

Take notice of that spark, who now enters the room; what an air of consequence he assumes; how gaily he is attired, yet he

he has not the least merit, mental or personal. Four years ago he could not procure credit for a crown; but by dint of effrontery he passed himself for apothecary, arrogated to himself some nostrums in medicine, and is now deemed worth ten thousand pounds.

I have heard it remarked, replied Agrestis, that money is thrown into the very mouths of fortune's minions and some men must grow rich, if all the lucky accidents that chance can give, will make them so. I know an apothecary, who, if a man will trust him with the care of his family, once in the course of a year, will take care to dispatch his help-mate; and I have often heard him declare, that women are always the best patients, especially if they die under his hands, for then said he, tho' I make a most unreasonable bill, it is never taxed, but discharged with as much chearfulness, as an extravagant heir does the expences of his father's funeral.

Observe that little smart black man, said Urbanus, that is talking with him in the shabby full trimmed coat. He is a bookseller in the neighbourhood, who has acquired a fortune by starving authors, pirating the works of others, and stock-jobbing.

That smart little fellow there, poreing over a pamphlet, is a prodigy in his way : he lives apparently genteel, yet nobody knows by what means he spends many hours of the day in this place, consequently cannot have much employment ; but what he has, one must imagine very lucrative. I have frequently observed him in company with persons of much good nature and some property, from whence I look upon him to be one of the class of spungers or hangers on.

Pray take notice Agrestis, continued the Citizen, of that gentleman, who just now ordered his coach to the door : I have a very remarkable anecdote concerning him.

A certain woman, not far from this place, who sold greens, had the good fortune to be left 40,000*l*. by a rich relation : hearing of which this gentleman, (being an adventurer, though a man of family) paid his addresses to her. The woman assured him, that as she had never received any testimonials of his affections, before the happy change in the condition, she was persuaded his desires tended to her money, not her person ; she could not admit his visits, and therefore desired him to desist.

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Upon this he feigned a fit of melancholy, and sighing, told her his passion was so great, that unless she gave him a satisfactory answer, he would drown himself at Paul's wharf.

The poor woman wrought upon by this artifice, permitted his addresses, and soon after he made himself master of her person and fortune.

Thus you see, said Urbanus, that the Coffee-houses, in this metropolis, comprehend a great variety of characters, are frequented by all kind of people, and also, that they afford a stranger a very good notion of the inhabitants in general.

C H A P IV.

Remarks on the Theatres, and the adjacent places at the time of breaking up of the Play.

THE following evening the citizen, with his country companions, began their nocturnal perambulation between the hours of nine and ten, attended at the request of Agrestis, by his old trusty

trusty servant Fidelio, who was likewise very desirous of seeing the humours of the town.

In about half an Hour, they reached the purlieus of Covent Garden, when the countryman, alarmed by a prodigious noise of coachmen, chairmen, link-boys, and others, enquiring the cause of such distraction—This, replied his friend, is the opening of the night scene in these parts ; the audience are just come from the Play-house, and departing for their respective destinations, which are as various as their situations in life.

That gentleman decorated with the red ribbons is ready for a transition from one species of entertainment to another, and driving full speed to lady Hairbrain's route, as is that decrepid old knight to Lady Wonton's levee.

Observe with what obsequious officiousness that spark in regimentals, hands his doxey into a chair, and follows her in another, lest they should receive an injury from the inclement air, in passing to a Bagnio, not above fifty yards distant.

Those three couple of sparks and missies in regular procession, are crossing over

the way to that coffee-house, as it is called, to render themselves as contemptible, as you can suppose human nature capable.

But who demanded the countryman, are those grave orderly people that have just entered this tavern ; they are returned his friend, a citizen from Leaden-hall street and his family who rarely visit the Play-house above once a year, and never deem their entertainment complete without a regale for the stomach, as well as the mind.—The old servant, who had minutely observed every person that mixed with the motley crowd, had particularly noticed several well dressed young fellows, come through the same passage repeatedly, and therefore enquired of his master's guide, the motive of such reiteration. These, my honest friend, said Urbanus, are a kind of beings, with which you country people are wholly unacquainted ; they are of the number of those who without any fortune live without any reputable employment, a species of lazy vermin, who infest these parts, and are always on the look out for their prey.

They are dextrous at picking pockets, and inveigling strangers into their haunts,
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in order to strip them of their money.— Their chief rendezvous is amongst bawds and whores, they eat their bread and fight their battles, hector and insult their cul-lies, sometimes gather their contributions, and occasionally pimp, betray and set— The company from the theatres being thus separated, and observation made on their respective characters ; Urbanus proposed to his friend a visit to several houses in those parts, that he might be an eye witness to what a shameful degree human nature could debase itself.

The proposal being agreed to, they entered a house, in Bridges-street, vulgarly denominated a Jelly-house, where their eyes were dazzled with the excessive glare of the company—When they were seated, the guide according to promise began his remarks—This scene, said, he, is a prelude to every kind of vice, folly, and debauchery, that lust and liquor can possibly incite.—The fine lady in the bar, thus decorated at the expence of fools, is nothing more than a chairman's daughter, but being nearly related to the master of the house, he has placed her in this station, where she has little else to do, than to dress, paint, patch, ogle her uncle's

beaux customers, and tattle with an amorous extravagance in order to induce him to squander his money, in hopes of obtaining the favour from her ; though at length she disappoints him of the desired felicity ; and having amused him while his money was flush, with kind glances and amorous witticisms, dispatches him, when it is exhausted, with a fullen reserve and affected air of modesty.

That well looking person you observe in the arms of a rotten strumpet, is an eminent merchant, who has a virtuous, loving wife and several fine children at home, but basely prefers the feigned embraces of a harlot, to the soft endearment of a virtuous love.

See that company of young fellows, each with his doxy upon his knee ; how jovially they carouse ! They are apprentices and journy-men, who take care to fleece their masters, to maintain their whores. The beautiful girl who sits pensive in yonder corner, being deprived of both father and mother, was importuned a long time by a young gentleman to submit to his passionate desires ; a large settlement was offered her, but she nobly de-

declined accepting the wages of her dishonour.

He then offered her marriage, and suborned an infamous wretch to sham the ceremony—But a month's co-habitation sated the hero, who after undeceiving, abandoned her to absolute penury.—Thus deserted, the master of the house arrested her for the rent, and her present Landlady being sent by the mock husband, compassionately paid the debt, and carried her to her own house, a notorious brothel. The sequel you may easily guess.

The antiquated Messalina, in company with the brawny flesh coloured man, is a lady of figure, who having tired all her servants, is compelled to have recourse to the frequenters of the stews ; but her desires are unconquerable, and she returns to her house every morning tired but not satisfied.

Are the magistrates, and their officers ignorant of these infamous houses? said the honest Fideio. By no means, replied Urbanus, the magistrates and their officers squeeze a good livelihood out of them by visiting them once a quarter, demanding hush money, and making them promise to behave better for the future.

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From thence they proceed down the street towards the Strand, and entered a certain alehouse where there were a company of blackguard fellows, carousing in a box by themselves—Suddenly a man came in and gave them a watch, on which they all arose and instantly departed—That man, said Urbanus, is one of the vigilant and trusty guards of the night, who having conducted a drunken man home, picked his pocket of his watch : he has now been giving that gang of thieves intelligence of a house he found left open by negligence, and they are gone to plunder it, whilst the worthy informer is going his rounds.

What a quarrel is there between a whore and rogue ; the former threatens to plunge a knife in the bosom of the latter : learn hence the dire effects of gin and jealousy—Hark ! what terrible shrieks are those at the door.—They are the cries of an unfortunate woman under the cruel hands of a relentless scoundrel, because she cannot furnish him with money, to administer to his idleness and extravagance.

At this moment came in a miserable object in a most tattered garb and piteous plight of body, to ask the favour
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of a dram to fortify her against the cold, from which she had no prospect of being exempt the whole night.

On enquiry, the spy found she was the only daughter of an old baronet, who was possessed of a large estate; but having forfeited her father's favour by marrying without his consent, he, like too many rash parents, absolutely refused to see, forgive, or succour her, married his cook-maid, and settled his whole fortune upon her.

The lovers struggled together a long time, till death kindly relieved the husband from a life of misery. The widow renewed her applications to the father, but was inhumanly denied admittance, and ——— but let compassion obliterate her faults and suggest to the humane, that when griping penury stares us in the face, that virtue must be next to impregnable, that will not cede on such pressing occasions.

They then proceeded towards St. Giles's and hearing in a street, near Long-acre, a company singing and danced, that they were a club of beggars bred up in idleness, but enabled by the charitable donations of well disposed persons,
to

to spend every night in riot and debauchery.

In the chimney corner of the same house, was a poor author, whose landlord had refused him admittance into his lodging, because he was unhappily, through dearth of business, a month in arrears with him for rent. He had obliged the world with some ingenious productions, but thro' want of taste in this ignorant age, they have been utterly neglected.—He was then finishing an elaborate performance, which met with the same fate as its predecessor.

Observe, said the guide, that woman, who so cordially embraces her husband. The poor fellow has been married these four years and never since enjoyed a moment, till the present. His ears have been rung with an incessant peal from her tongue till within these ten minutes ; impatient of his sufferings, he strapp'd her heartily and you see the good effects of such discipline.

That cruel villain, who is kicking his wife about the room, has been with his whores 'till near midnight, and is thus rewarding a virtuous woman, whom he left supperless, for waiting his return ; but I fancy this is the period of her woes,
and

and if she dies of the bruises, the scoundrel will make his deserved exit at Tyburn.

But who, said Agrestis, is that swagging old Blade, with the pimpled face, to whom the servile wretches around him seem to pay such extraordinary deference?

He is one replied the guide, that has acquired five thousand pounds by keeping a twopenny lodging house, and occasionally receiving stolen goods. His infamous character excluding him from reputable company, he frequents this house, where he can be heard of a necessitous mob.

What, cried Fidelio, will money, got by such means as those entitle the possessor to respect? Sure returned Urbanus, money now-a-days implies industry, honesty, good sense, and every commendable quality. I know a certain person, lately chosen overseer of the poor, whose fortune is the assured product of fraud and extortion.

Agrestis and his old servant expressing their admiration at such extraordinary scenes, desired their sage conductor to guide them home, and defer their speculations

culations to a future opportunity, tho' their absence from their habitations was prolonged by an incident that happened in their way.

C H A P. V.

Description of a Watch House, with the Characters of a Parish Beadle, and reforming Constable.

IN consequence of the desire of Agrestis, our Peripatetics bended their course to the Eastward; but where interrupted at Fleet-ditch, by a great clamour in the watch house, at which they stopped, on Urbanus's informing them, that it was a scene worthy their attention. On their entrance, the countryman were struck with amazement, at the motley groupe which presented itself. The benches were lined with decrepid fellows quaffing Tobacco, and disputing about their vigilance in their duty.

Before the bar stood a well dressed man, to answer to the impertinent queries of a pragmatICAL coxcomb of a constable, who presided in this nocturnal court. Near unto him was a very beautiful

ful woman, bedewing her cheeks with tears, and lamenting her unhappy fate in being exposed to the capricious award of a merciless Myrmidon who under the sanction of law, basely preys upon the unfortunate, and cruelly aggravates the misery of the wretched.

The honest Fidelio, prompted by curiosity, entreated his master to stay the event of this mighty trial, the particulars of which, we hope, may gratify the curious reader, as they are related to expose the villainy of those, into whose hands too often is committed the distribution of justice. It appeared from the course of enquiry, that this man and woman had been apprehended between the hours of eleven and twelve, by one of those pretty fogging officers, called bea-dles, merely from a view of preying upon them, to the joint emolument of himself and constable, who had long practised this oppression conjunctively.

The man was a person of character and fortune, the woman indeed was one of those unhappy wretches, who having lost with her virtue, the means of living honestly, was compelled to have recourse to prostitution, to avoid such practices as tend to an ignominious death.

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The constable was an indigent, idle fellow, who had several years served in that office, not that he was repeatedly elected to it, but employed by such persons as were, and who, to avoid the cares and anxieties attendant on this, as well as other offices of justice, chose voluntarily to make him a nocturnal allowance, to represent their persons, and support their dignity.

This scandal to humanity, as a pretence for his acceptance of an office, so disagreeable to every benevolent mind, impudently alledged as his motive, a regard to virtue and religion, though from the sequel, he appeared as destitute of either, as most of his brother reformers.

The gentleman incensed at his abrupt treatment, expostulated with him on the illegality of interrupting any person who quietly passed about their business, maerly on a suspicion of their character; observed that those women and those only could be deemed obnoxious to the public, who plied in the open streets, and abruptly seized on persons as they passed, and that therefore the proceeding of the beadle was unjustifiable.

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He then resolutely demanded the immediate dismissal of himself and woman, on the penalty of a most rigorous prosecution——The nocturnal monarch, assuming his usual consequence, assured him, that his insolent behaviour, would but enhance his misdemeanour, and that if he expected lenity at his hands, he must treat with him in milder terms ; as he had special orders from his superior officer, not to suffer one woman of the town to pass unnoticed.

I defy, replied the gentleman, both you and your officer ; and again demand immediate dismissal, as you would avoid shewing cause, for stopping any person on the high-way, without a justifiable pretence.

Is not that hussy a strumpet, and liable to punishment on that account ? returns this mockery of power ; that, replied, the gentlemen, by no means interferes with the propriety of your procedure, nor can I answer to the question ; but I will venture to affirm, that to confine any person on a mere suspicion of being a woman of the town, without being able to alledge any misdemeanor against her, is contrary to all law and justice whatsoever.

Various altercations ensued ; but the constable at length apprehending from the appearance, and pertinent remonstrances of the gentleman, some future loss would accrue to himself and partner in iniquity, thought proper to dismiss him and the woman, with warning them to be cautious, how for the future, they insulted an officer on his duty.

The affair being decided, our spy and his two companions having ordered in their gallon of porter, as it is usual on these occasions, proceeded homeward, and the former as they walked along entered upon his remarks on this occurrence for the amusement of the latter.

From this scene, you may learn, said he, how flagrantly justice is often perverted, and that the most salutary institutions are sometimes prostituted to the most infamous purposes.

To punish vice is doubtless essential to the welfare of society ; but when the rod of corrections is vested in unworthy hands, the very exercise of it becomes a curse. The sanction of laws has too often screened complicated villainy, and knaves have perpretated the most iniquitious actions under the mask of justice.

Strange

Strange though it may appear to a mind untaught in the school of Vice; perjury is retailed in the courts of judicature; nor are there wretches wanting, disposed at all times, to barter their veracity for one pound one.

Hence it comes to pass, that the fortunate scoundrel vaunts over distressed virtue, and injured innocence complains unredressed.—Indeed the transactions of this night together with those of every hour, combine to prove the validity of this maxim; paraphrased from the ingenious Gay; “That money can often avert the stroke of justice; and that if riches did not generally procure an exemption from law, Jack Ketch would have many more customers.”——But as we are at some distance, continued Urbanus, from our respective habitations, I will give you a sketch of a parish beadle, and reforming constable, as they were the principal persons concerned in this act of iniquity.

Before I enter on my design, I must intreat of you ever to remember, that as there are no rules without exception, you do not conceive a general prejudice against any sect or profession, because of the disgrace, which some may reflect on

the same ; and likewise, to rest assured, that when I characterize a species of men, such display is agreeable to the received and confirmed opinion of the intelligent part of mankind.

Those gentry arrayed in party-coloured horsemen's coats, and broad laced hats, are servants to their respective parishes, and called Beadles. They go to church, and patrol the streets during the time of service, carry the staff before the Reverend Doctor ; whip the dogs and noisy boys ; and perform a number of such like important services in the course of their ecclesiastical function.

At night they are employed in the service of virtue, to search for abandoned women and disorderly men, whom on apprehension they are to bring before the officer of the night, at the tribunal, a watch or round house.

Thus, though the institution of their office is serviceable to society, it frequently furnishes them with an opportunity of availing themselves of the same to the corruption of justice and oppression of the poor ; and as they are in general indigents and commonly lazy and drunken, they are as commonly eye servants, who pretend to assiduity under the
immediate

immediate inspection of their superiors; while unnoticed, they are capable of every mean act, that will produce a shilling.

A modern reformer of vice, or a reforming constable, most commonly is a necessitous wretch, who like the pimp, lives upon the debaucheries of others. He searches a brothel, not to punish vice, but to obtain a fee for his connivance. He preys on the poor whores, whom he robs of the product of their iniquities, and by that means add to their wickedness, in as much as he obliges them immediately to renew their vices to obtain the very means of living.

Like a prudent minister, he determines to render his post as profitable as possible, and is in fact the encourager of what he pretends to suppress, by protecting for bribes, the very delinquents he should punish; persuaded that each brothel he breaks deprives him of considerable gain.

The gay courtesan with her pockets lined with gold, may whore with impunity, while the needy strumpet is daily in danger of being chained to the hempen block; where instead of being reclaimed, she is hardened in her preverse course, by
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the example of the abandoned wretches around her.

The suppression of vice and reformation of manners, added the spy, is a most laudable undertaking in the society; but unless they fix on worthy men for the execution of this salutary design, and prevent the daily abuses committed by their officers, there is reason to apprehend such remissness will be attended with considerable injury to their reputation, as well as prevent many well disposed persons from encouraging a work, in itself, worthy of their assistance.

Whilst a set of mercenary, profligate fellows are employed to detect others, who are hardly worse than themselves, the innocent will frequently suffer, and the guilty be screened from justice, for the sake of a bribe offered to miscreants, who make it their business, not so much to suppress base women, and those who harbour them, as to share with them the fruits of their prostitution, and extortion. I once met with a humorous circumstance happily illustrative of the pious effects of these fellows vigilance.

Passing along the Strand, I heard a man, who by means of one of these useful members of society, had fined for swearing

swearing, thus address his companion, I warrant, they thought they had produced a great reformation on me, because they fined me a shilling for an oath, when I had not another in the world ; but faith I was pretty even with them, for going home, and relating the circumstance to my wife, we cursed the constable for two hours successively ; which was the only compensation we had for going to bed supperless.

A mercenary officer of the peace in fine is the greatest pest to society, in that he frequently substitutes vice for virtue, and virtue for vice, puts modesty to the blush, protects infamy, oppresses the friendless, and emboldens the impious delinquent to brave the laws of his country, and undertake the commission of every act that can injure his fellow creature, and disgrace human nature.

Agrestis and his honest servant could not but discover their surprize, that there were such infamous beings in human form, as well as declared, that vice might well reign triumphant in the metropolis, where its averred correctors were secretly its greatest abettors, were the rod of correction was diverted from its proper use, and justice was lame as well as blind.

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Your remarks are just, observed the citizen, and the more you see of this world, the more you will be confirmed in them ; but alas ! thro' the prevalence of ambition, and avarice, there are few amongst us who nobly dare to oppose the torrent of vice by word and example, because now a-days, the path of plain dealing too frequently leads to poverty and disgrace, while that of falshood, treachery and detraction as frequently ends in riches and worldly honour. ——— But be it my greatest glory to persevere in my integrity amidst all the changes of this transitory life.

This closed the night's speculation, and Agrestis took leave of his worthy friends, with enhanced desire of his company on the like beneficial occasion.

CHAP.

C H A P. VI.

Description of a Route, with Remarks
on the Company.

THE spy and his companion having met according to appointment; the former proposed to conduct him to one of the politest and most fashionable entertainments, this seat of luxury and dissipation can possibly furnish. It is commonly called a Route, and comprehends an assembly met to commit all that can be repugant to justice, honour and modesty.

Here vice shines triumphant; here virtue rarely enters, and if perchance she mixes with the deluded votaries of the former, it is with the utmost danger of receiving a lasting taint.

Urbanus, having introduced his friend, chose an obscure corner of the room, that unnoticed, he might communicate his observation. Behold, said he, at that card table, a disgrace to her sex, one whose mental deformity, exceeds her personal beauty, a wretch lost to honour, lost to virtue; a female gambler. She once lived

ed with reputation, but the desire of gaming, eclipsed that brightest of jewels, and will, if long prevalent, reduce her to the lowest degree of infamy.

Descended from weathy and virteous parents, she received a liberal education, and was trained to every graceful accomplishment. ——— At the age of twenty she was married to a man of fortune and character, with whom she lived some time in the most refined endearments of connubial life.

Her husband was an example of virtue, one who dared to maintain his integrity, amidst the scoffs of a modish acquaintance, as well as remonstrate with them on gaming, as nothing less than a guise for picking of pockets. Influenced by his noble principile, she trod in his paths, and was at once the ornament of her sex, and the delight of mankind. ——— But, alas! as evil communication corrupts good manners, an unhappy acquaintance with a neighbouring lady, foiled her virtuous resolutions, and gradually allured her into the snare of vice. This abandoned woman first drew her into play, under pretence of amusement; and when she had contracted a propensity to it at different

different times won from her such considerable sums, that she was obliged to apply to her husband, for cash to discharge those debts of honour.—This occasioned a suspicion in his breast, notwithstanding he complied with her request, with a gentle admonition to avoid profusion:

Pursuing this destructive inclination with inflamed desire, she lost in one night more than her husband's whole fortune could discharge, and to avoid his knowledge of her dissingenuous conduct, prostituted her person to the wretch who had won her money, to recover her loss.

From this fatal moment her misery commenced.—Every artifice was practised to conceal the injury she had done the best of men, the most indulgent of husbands. But, as justice generally pursues the guilty, even in this state of existence, the villain exulted in his conquest, and insolently boasted of the favours he had received. ——— The incensed husband, sent him a challenge, and by a lunge of resentment, retaliated the injury.

Having dispatched his adversary, his indignation abated, he proposed to pardon

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don his wife, and preserve her if possible from utter destruction. But her mind was become insusceptible of every generous impression, and she treated his clemency with the most aggravating petulance — A separation ensued. — She is now absorbed in the lust of gaming, to which she devotes her whole life, whilst her afflicted spouse is hastening to the grave.

Abandoned monster ! exclaimed Agrestis, how dare she shew her guilty face ? how assume that smile of complacency ? is conscience dormant in her breast ? No, replied the Spy, that monitor never dies ; she now feels all the horrors of guilt and only assumes a mask to conceal the agonies that torture her distracted mind.

Dreading a moment's reflection, she flies to this scene of dissipation, to drown her thoughts in riot and luxury ; but these hours of revelling are waisting her to age, and deformity ; when the bloom of those cheeks shall fade, and those sparkling eyes become languid, when every comfort shall desert her, and all prospects of bliss present and future vanish irrevocable.

But there let her remain with her guilt upon her head, and observe that airy
spark

spark in green and gold ; he's a wretch as obscure as wicked ; from a candle snuffer at the play-house, he became an under actor, and having a tolerable figure, with a consummate effrontery, gains on the affections of silly girls, and frequently serves them in the honorable capacity of pimp, the profits of which added to his salary from the Threatre, enables him to make a splendid figure, and pass himself upon the ignorant as a man of abilities.

And are there people returned Agrestis, weak enough to be thus imposed upon by the meer shadow of appearance ? Parade, replied his friend, ever goes down with the million, and if you desire popularity you must make a glaring figure without.

Take notice of that grave curmudgeon, who sits as pensive over his cards as a poet over his papers under a desertion of ideas, that's Mr. Donefirst, who lives by calculation, and availing himself of the particular circumstances of every interesting event that occurs.——He'll take the odds on the death of his most intimate companion, or a life most valuable to the public.——He's a grand match-maker at New-market, and an

adept in the art of jockeying—Whilst the gay part of the company are displaying their raillery, that old fox watches an opportunity to slip a card, and hugs himself in the thought of being a knave undetected——Observe with what good nature that smart young fellow in the blue frock loses his money to the lady that sits over against them.——But he starts up and makes his exit——his pockets are emptied, and he's gone to recruit by dint of the pistol——the passengers on the western road must furnish him with his demands, which obtained, he'll instantly return, and pursue his game as eagerly as before.

By your description he must be a highwayman, cried Agrestis ; you guess right returned his friend ; and one cannot but pity the unaccountable levity of a man, who can calmly suffer himself to be fleeced of that, at a gaming table, which he acquires at the hazard of his life.

There are others of the same profession in the room, and 'tis much if we read not of some of their lives in the next Newgate Magazine.——The lady with whom he played, well knows by what means he obtains the money which she

has won ; she's as arrant a bilk as he's a thief ; and having been debauched by a notorious gambler, as so far inbibed his principles, as to be capable of practising the most palpable frauds without the least remorse.

Being dismissed from her keeper's service she associated with a set of sharpers, who having let her into the knowledge of all the chichaneries of play, arrayed her in gay apparel, and reported abroad, that she was a widow lady of considerable fortune.

The plain succeeded, she obtained access to persons of the first quality, and as she was handsome, a number of amorous youths courted the company of this toast, who pretending to be fond of cards, fleeced them pretty handsomely before they departed.——By these iniquitous means, she has amassed a considerable fortune ; and as she has never been detected in an intrigue, passes in this part of the world for a woman of unfulled reputation.

During the course of your remarks my good friend and moniter, said Agrestis, I could scarce keep my eyes from that meagre figure, whose very countenance

seems to indicate his necessitous condition.—That replied the Spy, is the once gay and gallant Hippolito, the pride of the Park and the Play-house.

Having lavished a large fortune in riotous living, he is reduced to the disagreeable necessity of accepting a weekly pittance, from the very men who shared the spoils of his ruined estate. He is now preparing for the press, a new edition of the ingenious Mr. Hoyle's useful treatise on gaming, with notes critical, emendatory, and explanatory.

This publication, he hopes will in some tolerable degree compensate for the losses he had sustained, as there are few persons of distinction, but will grace their library with so ornamental a volume——Observe that old fellow in the tye wigg, formal cravat, and square-toe-shoes; his name is Lovegold; he constantly attends these honourable assemblies——Those heaps of money, that are placed in order on the table before him, he lends to those losers, whose security he knows to be valid, at the moderate interest of fifty per cent. by which he has amassed a prodigious sum.

What strange groupe of mortals are they, inquired Agrestis, at yonder table,

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on which the dice are ratling? — That company, replied his friend, is a medley of all sorts, from the man of distinction to the mechanic — The game, with which they are diverting themselves, is called Hazard, from the great sums that are won or lost at it, by the single cast of a die.

The gamblers will persuade you 'tis the fairest of all kinds of play, depending absolutely on chance, wholly irrespective of judgment, but they have a method of changing the dice, and introducing such as they can manage to their advantage. You may observe with what eagerness each takes up the cup impatiently waiting a throw in his favour.

How different the countenances change as the games go for or against them! expecting his award of fortune, with as much anxiety, as a condemned criminal hoping for the sovereign's reprieve! But do not these persons of eminence think it derogatory to their honour to rank with others so much their inferiors, cried the countryman? Not on these occasions said Urbanus: for death and dice level all distinctions.

Indeed persons in general entertain very false notions of good and bad company

pany ; and what is called the best company, will often upon reflection appear to be the worst. It is not their magnificence, their pompous buildings, and luxurious divertisements, which constitute that title, no ; they are ornaments of a different kind, that compose the truly great man.

In this whole circle, I fear there is not one free from pride, intemperance, and many other vices. He who would frequent the best company (according to the received opinion of the present age) must divest himself of every virtue, be ashamed of all mortality, and openly avow such principles, as are incompatible with humanity, clash with true honour, as well as repugnant to common honesty.

He must be able to laugh sobriety out of countenance, drink hard to drown reason, and thus reduced to a level with brutallity, plunge into shameless extravagancies, which the more sensible beasts, were they endowed with the faculty of speech, would condemn as the disgrace of the creation.

Villainies are daily perpetrated under the genteel mask of gaming, and it is the allowance of such corruptions, such detestable manners as these, that makes persons

sons of the first rank, the very Worst company although called the Best.—Where gaming is practised, avarice presides and every man views his money in his neighbours purse with an eye of desire.

In company of this kind, a man's having money to play is a sufficiency of merit and brings him upon a level with the most opulent or dignified. —But hark ! the clock strikes two, let us hence Remember this scene and the remarks I have made upon it, which you will find consonant with farther experience in the future course of our speculation.

C H A P. VII.

View of the Town at Midnight,
with many Characteristical Anecdotes.

THE sober and industrious part of mankind are now retired from the cares and hurry of life, to the downy pillow, that mansion of sweet repose, which recruits the spirits of weary mortals, and capacitates them for the business of the
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approaching day.—The streets echo with the sound of watchmen bellowing past two, the wanton shouts of drunkards, and the shrieks of profligate woman. The sons of lewdness creep from their skulking places, to gratify their more than brutal inclinations, under cover of the night—The painted harlot, whose emaciated figure, and wan complexion, disgust by day, now through favour of the burning taper, possesses charms, and wins to her bed the deluded rake whose desires sicken on the ensuing dawn—reason is now hushed, and little awakes but riot and debauchery.—In short, the order of nature seems reversed, and little superiority is discernable between the human and the brutal creation.

Urbanus, who was no stranger to this dark scene, and therefore less liable to be seduced by its enchantments, could behold it with advantage, and render the most glaring spectacles of vice incentives to his perseverance in virtue.

Having spent the evening in agreeable converse with his friend, he reminded him of the mutual design, which they now prosecuted, still attended by the trusty Fidelio.—The Spy, to fortify the mind of

of the unexperienced Agrestis against the temptations, to which he knew he must shortly be inevitably exposed, in some measure caused him to anticipate the approaching scene.

You must now said he my dear friend summon your every virtue, and collect your reasoning powers ; for you are entering on love's enchanted castle, and numbers of bewitching nymphs will soon play around you.—Every art will be used to seduce, every device practised to trapan you.—Remember therefore that I present not to your view these objects, to inflame your desire, but excite your aversion, and if outside appearance should gain upon you, consider the sink of uncleanness, that lurks within.—But as I have reason to hope you are virtuous from principle, I shall desist from admonition, and proceed to our main design.

They had now reached the Garden, when Urbanus paused, to consider to which of the many scenes in the neighbourhood he should first introduce his friend—Passing through Russel-Street, they heard a clamour at a certain house not far distant from the stage door of the Theatre ; O! said the Spy; let us enter; this

this is one of the principal nurseries of vice in the whole town, and about this time is in high charge.

Having knocked at the door, a fellow peeped through a wicket, demanded their business, and after a little prevarication granted them admittance.—— They were ushered into a room, which contained a medley of males and females, and resounded with as many as are comprehended in the gamut.—— Some were singing, others crying, some dancing, others swearing, some heated with liquor, tore their throats with boisterous rant, while others, overcome by riot, were snoring with their heads reclined on a chair.

There were a continual ingress and egress, as well as incessant buzz, like bees in a hive.— Their appearance was as variegated as the rainbow, and their converse as different as their feature— After waiting near half an hour, the Spy and his companion observed a vacant corner, which commanded the room, and made choice of the same as the seat of their speculation.

The astonished Fidelio stared about him, and discovered as much surprize, as a peasant at the first time of going to a country

country fair.—Addressing himself to the Spy ; Sure fir, said he, those fine, pretty ladies are not whores ? one would think they could any of them get husbands every day, as they are most of them young and handsome ; what pity 'tis they should utter such horrid oaths. Your honest unsuspecting mind, trusty Fidelio, replied the Spy, induces you ever to judge with candour, and as you have never seen human nature in its utmost deformity, you cannot conceive what hideous beings there are in the world.—But if you attend a little to the discourse of the blessed company it will furnish you with a strong idea of their principles than I can possible express—

Their attention was then engrossed by the following genteel parley between a strapping black ey'd wench, and a little dapper fellow, in a brown frock, short red waistcoat and buckskin breeches, with his front decorated by a Tyburn-top.

“ You blackguard dog, have not I maintained you these thirteen months like a gentleman, and did not you twice in that time tip me the favour, and make me pawn my clothes to pay the doctor ? ”

Bl—st your eyes you whore, if you mag, I'll tip you such a right one, that I'll

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make you believe the devil's come for you before your time, replied the bully.

During this improving converse, there entered a tall genteel fellow, smartly dressed, who, like a second Macheath, saluted all the girls in the room.——

——The pimp, said the Spy, are more obliged to this buck for pretty wenches, than all the town besides.—Though he is never free from a complication of disorders, he is the reigning debauchee of his time, and so great a favourite with the women, that he frequently boasts no girl can resist him.—He maintains a connection with the whole procuring faculty, because as he seduces a number of girls, he frequently recommends to them tit bits, of which they make great advantage.

When, by his infernal artifice, he has formed an unhappy girl, perfectly for vice, to render her totally callous, he introduces her to the company of his abandoned acquaintance, by which means he frequently comes off without paying his reckoning or obtains the favour of a rake of quality. The worthy gentleman's name is Bamwell; his father is an eminent Apothecary, near Red-Lyon-Square.——He received a good education

cation, and was put apprentice to a neighbouring gentleman of his father's profession, but his passions being strong, and his reason weak, he abandoned Galen to follow Venus, and soon reached the first form in the school of love.

His master treated his neglect of business with great lenity for some time, but at length, provoked by his dissolute behaviour, warned him either to reform his conduct, or quit the house, and follow the guidance of his unrestrained desires. Bamwell chose the latter, and having burned his indenture, took his leave of the family, and commenced the gentleman at large.

When his finances were exhausted, he feigned a pretence of an engagement to go abroad, by which means he obtained from the old gentleman, a bank note of an hundred pounds, together with a stock of fashionable cloaths.

Thus recruited, he applied himself closely to the various games practised in town, become an adept in most, and lived like many others—nobody knows how.

As he is versed in all the arts of fraud, he is a great favourite with the lady in the white sattin sack ; he has the

run of her house, which together with the profits of play, enable him to make a figure in life.—Her name is Jenny Decoy; she is as arrant a jilt as any in town, and by a demure look and oily tongue, draws into her trammels, numbers of heated youths, and amorous dotards, whose contributions enable her to live with the utmost splendor, and supply the wants of her favourite man—for most of these ladies have their favourites.

Observe those two blades sitting each with their doxies on their knee, almost drunk and shouting bawdy songs as if emulous of excelling each other in obscenity.—The person in the uniform is commodore Downright; the other is Sir Nicholas Frothy.

The former is a brave officer lately returned from the East Indies, where he signalized his valour in the service of his country. Rather than lead an inactive life, he beats the rounds almost every night, with the guady prig who sits next him, Tom Babble, Lord Brainless, and other choice spirits of the first rank.—The commodore is too blunt, to be a favourite with the ladies; if he thinks a woman handsome, damn him, he'll tell her so; if

it otherwise, he'll declare his mind with the same frankness.

His chief delight is either in his bottle and whore, or over his bowl, to relate his adventures to a few friends around him.

With all his oddities, he has a good heart, is ever disposed to relieve the indigent, and may be deemed as complete a tar as England ever produced.—Sir Nicholas was born in Ireland, and after the reigning fashion of the age, sent to Paris for education, where he became intimate with some French rakes, who were devoted to all the fopperies of that flippant nation.

Here he imbibed not one virtue ; unless the prevailing notion of precedence in point of rank, being sufficient to justify a gentleman in pinking any scoundrel, who should dare to affront him, may be deemed one. As he neglected his studies, he had only a smattering of the classics or sciences, which instead of improving, intoxicated his mind, and rendered him the more despicable coxcomb.

He has an excessive passion for dress, which, as it ever draws respect from the common herd of mankind, causes him to

arrogate to himself a degree of merit to which he has no claim.

In short, he is a compound of pride, vanity, conceit and impertinence, without the mixture of a single good quality — His extravagance has almost exhausted his fortune, and he associates with the commodore for special purposes. — As he had required an immense sum abroad, he stands Captain, and very often rewards him generously for recommending a fine woman to him.

That youth surrounded by a posse of ladies, is just at age, and having received a pretty fortune bequeathed by an industrious father, is thus squandering it in riot and debauchery. — The fellow next to him is a spunger or hanger on, who by imposing on his credulity, indulging him in his foibles, and occasionally fighting his battles, exacts from him an entire maintenance.

His name is Ned Hardy ; he is a noted bruiser, and has lived some years on young fellows of fortune, who vainly affect the company of such vermin, as an indication of their courage and gallantry, or a protection for their insolence and effrontery. 'Tis much if a quarrel ensues not soon amongst the ladies ; as he is young and foolish,

foolish, he will be deemed a prize worth contending for.——But alas! poverty and diseases will attend a perseverance in this course, and those, who now cajole, will then reject him with the most contemptuous disdain.

But behold, said Urbanus, an object that at once excites our aversion, and pity.——A fine woman extended on the floor, exposing those parts, which, was she not thus deprived of all sense, she would labour on such occasion to conceal.——Being addicted to drams, she generally comes into this house much elevated, and having drank three or four gills of Madeira, frequently exhibits to the company this shocking spectacle. So she is carried out like a beast; and the savages deride her condition, and are delighted with such a prostitution of matchless beauty.

The Spy had scarce finished his remark, when a clashing of swords was heard in the adjoining room. They dispatched Fidelio to enquire the cause; he instantly returning, told them, that a gentleman was expiring in the arms of his friend of a wound he received in a duel. It appeared on examination, that the unfortunate victim had

had been grossly affronted by a woman in company with his antagonist, who resented his reproof of such unjustifiable behaviour. Is it possible, said Agrestis, that women devoid of honour should occasion so fatal a catastrophe? Must not the man be a lunatic, who hazards his life to humour the caprice of such wretches?

To a man of reason and reflection, it doubtless appears so, replied Urbanus; but these people are immersed in sensuality, that the nobler powers lay dormant, and nought prevails with them, but the gratification of the baser passions.

Too many of this cast will dare to acquire the title of a man of courage among the ladies, who would desert a cause that honour, justice and humanity enjoin them to assert.

You see upon the whole, added the sage Urbanus, to what pursuits passion, unrestrained by reason, hurries mankind; and that a mind destitute of virtue, is capable of every act injurious to individuals, destructive to society, and derogatory to the dignity of human nature. But let us quit this scene, with enchanted
ideas

ideas of virtue ; and with confirmed resolutions, let us,

Still in the paths of honour persevere,
And ne'er from past or present ills despair:
For blessings ever wait on virtuous deeds;
And tho' a late, a sure reward succeeds.

CHAP VI.

Midnight View continued. Adventures at certain Taverns in the purlieus of Covent Garden.

OUR peripatetics being disgusted with the company and conversation of the motley tribe, with which they lately mixed, departed in quest of new entertainment, and at the instigation of the Spy called at the R— — in Br— — —s Street, as a place worthy the notice of persons of their speculative turn of mind.

Urbanus, when they had called for their bottle of Burgundy, sent for Harry Nimble the waiter, a veteran in the service, and by the promise of a handsome reward, obtained from him such strictures on

on the different companies, as proved highly entertaining to his country friend.

Harry in his youth was obliged to fly to London, for a trespass on a park, adjoining to his father's cottage in Buckinghamshire, and was reduced soon after his arrival to the necessity of carrying a taper, to light the company in their passage from the playhouses. His agility and address at length recommended him to the notice of the person, who then kept this house, by whom he was entertained as an errand boy.

Being an accute lad, by his assiduity he grew into favour with his master, and was preferred from the knife board to the kitchen, where he attended the cook, and improved to such a degree, that in the space of two years he could serve up a dish, equal to the desire of the most luxurious appetite.

To this qualification he added a most dextrous manage of the napkin, together with that cringing submission requisite to recommend him to the customers, as well as ward off many a blow or lunge in the guts. — Nor was his art in procuring inferior to that of H — — — himself ; he always kept as regular a list, and could suit the taste of a cully to as great

a nicety, provided he was as well paid. No person therefore could be better adapted to furnish the Spy with such information as he required.

Harry, having entered the room, and made his compliments, at the request of the gentleman took a chair, and began as follows.

In compliance with the desire of that gentleman, to whom I am under infinite obligations, I will unfold many secrets, which will surprize those, who are unpractised in the frauds of mankind. If you attend to the characters I shall describe, you will find that few in this place are in reality what they affect to be; on the contrary, that the major part are the very reverse; for instance, the sanctified priest will appear an infamous hypocrite; the swaggering bully, a cudgeled coward; the pretended physician an illiterate quack; the modest matron, a lascivious harlot; the noble count a French barber, some whores with honour, and some chaste women, without the gentleman a mountebank, a player, a gentleman, an honest man with a bad character, and a knave with the title of a man of principle.

No person has had a better opportunity than myself of tracing the dark paths
of

of human life, as I have lived more than twenty years in this house, and been witness to scenes, of which you have not the least notion.

He then lead them into a large room in which was a company of men and women, who by their drefs appeared to be persons of distinction. There are all characters, said the guide, worthy of notice. As for the women, by their behaviour they evince their profession.

The smart young gentleman in blue and gold with his face towards you, is eldest son to Sir Timothy Totter, Baronet, and heir to eighteen thousand pounds a year. — As his father cannot long survive, he borrows considerable sums of old Lovegold the usurer, which he chiefly spends in the Garden amongst the women. But who, said Agrestis, is that meagre figure, who is deeply engaged in toying with the little black ey'd girl in green. That, replied Harry, is a doctor of music, eminent for a late ingenious comic Opera: his is Catgut; he procured the honorary degree of Doctor at the expence of what should be held most sacred, and maintains it by professing principles repugnant to the dictates of his heart. — Though one would im-

imagine by his emaciated carcase, the power of enjoyment had failed him ; a more lascivious cully resorts not the garden, nor does the most heated debauchee labour with more eagerness to gratify his passion.

Time would fail me, should I endeavour to recount the number of women he has deprived of their virtue, or of men he has adorned with horns——He is as much enquired after by the women, as an eminent toast by the other sex ; notwithstanding which he is particularly fond of a bunter, and is often seen in the street in full scent after an oyster-wench.

His talents in his profession are excellent, which, added to a general knowledge of things and an insinuating address, procure him the favour of many persons of distinction, by whom his company is much courted.

That grave looking gentleman, said he, is a clergyman ; he was tutor to young Totter, whose favour he conciliated by indulging him in his youthfull foibles, to the neglect of his morals and education. The reverend pedagogue, having an eye to future interest, took care never to thwart his pupil, so he studied just

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as much under him, as he thought fit; nor did Mr. Compliance ever contradict him.

If report is true, the same worthy divine introduced him to Poll Cole, as well as initiated him in the rites of Bacchus, to which he is himself a most zealous devotee. — However that be, it is well known, that Mr. Compliance, through the interest of his pupil, obtained a fine cure of two hundred pounds per annum, and was retained in the house, as guardian of the young Baronet's conduct; nevertheless he has been seen supporting his feeble patron, as he reeled from hence to M——l——'s under the Piazza, about three in the morning.

Execrable hypocrite! cried Agrestis, thus to pervert the design of the father, and encourage the vices of the son, under the mask of a most sacred function; no wonder that infidelity prevails, when the ministers of Revelation, by their infamous practices, reflect such disgrace on the cause they pretend to espouse. — That person who seems to squint to the right, returned Harry, while he ogles the lady on the left, is the right honourable the Lord Viscount Lurewell; he rarely looks a man in the face, because, being ad-
dicted

dicted to lying, he ever questions the veracity even of his own assertion. Having ruined his fortune at play, he infers his right to practice those tricks upon others which he has learned at the greatest expence.—He is a man of penetration, and can easily discern the disposition of those with whom he converses. By indulging young Totter in his ridicu'ous humours, he often draws him into play, strips him of his cash, gets his note for a cool hundred or two, and dismisses him with as polite an air, as a whore of fashion her bubbled cully.

His lordship will frequently condescend to join in any of his frolicksome schemes, and together with the pious Mr. Compliance, associate in the laudable employment of what the bloods call, beating the rounds——They are very dextrous at overturning punch bowls, breaking pier-glasses, knocking down superannuated watchmen, kicking waiters, and many others heroic actions, which are the pride and glory of a modern gentleman of taste and spirit.

Young Totter, though dull in his academical studies, is a proficient in those accomplishments, which constitute a good fellow, and rivals the first buck of the

age, in any enterprize of pith and moment——That little well set man in white and silver, is the only son of an eminent brewer not far from Spitalfields; his name is Frantic; his affectionate father kept him at boarding school till he was very near fourteen years old; but, as his master received special orders never to correct him, instead of improving in knowledge and virtue, his natural perverseness of temper encreased with his years, and he contracted every disagreeable quality that could render him obnoxious to society.——When he left school he committed such outrages in his father's neighbourhood, that complaints were perpetually lodged against him, and it was determined by his friends to try what effect an India voyage might have towards reclaiming this head-strong youth.

During the course of the voyage, tho' recommended to the captain's peculiar care, through his refractory behaviour, he became at once the contempt and hatred, of the whole crew, and having been expelled the company of the officers, and reduced to the necessity of messing with some of the most infamous wretches who

who were going as soldiers to the company's settlements.

On his landing at Bengall, he took elegant lodgings, hired a servant to attend him during his stay, and assumed a genteel appearance.—But he soon sullied the renown he acquired thro' this glare, by his scandalous behaviour, and was as much detested and rejected on shore, as he had been in the wooden world.—During the homeward bound passage, he lay under so odious a stigma, that he was obliged to mess by himself; and returned to England, with as much disgrace as he set out on his voyage with éclat ——— Soon after his arrival, he contracted an intimacy with and engaged the affections of a young lady of considerable fortune, who (strange as it may appear) lived but in him.—Instead of returning the generous adour, he lavished his money upon harlots, the knowledge of which so affected the virtuous lady, that a few months brought her with sorrow to the grave.

Such is the prevalence of love, and such its blindness to the faults of its darling object, that notwithstanding the ingratitude of the wretch, she bequeathed him her whole fortune, amounting to up-

wards of twenty thousand pounds.—

This sum enabled Mr. Frantic to gratify the height of his excentric disposition, and he cut a figure as contemptible as it was expensive—by persons of sense, he was shunned as a fool, by those of honour as a knave, and by those of fashion, as a complex of the clown and fop.

Affecting the fashionable taste, he hired lodgings in Berkeley Square, and took into keeping a celebrated courtesan, whom he maintained in the utmost splendour.—He then set up his chariot, and being Phaetonically inclined, would frequently drive his mistress to some neighbouring villages, on parties of pleasure.—As he went to bed every night so drunk and debilitated, that he could rarely employ her in her proper profession ; she had several gallants, who were well paid for performing his duty.

At last, having wheedled him out of a handsome settlement, she left him and cohabited with a smart young officer, who had inclination and ability to gratify her utmost desires.—Frantic having squandered his fortune, was thrown into gaol for debt ; from whence after a continuance

tinuance of four years, his father released him, and now allows him a weekly pittance for his support; though at a season of dotage, he frequently obtains considerable sums, from the credulous old gentleman; but care is taken that on his demise, the disposal of his affluent fortune will not be left to his prodigal son.

These remarks having been made on the company, Harry begged leave to retire, and Urbanus, with his friend at the same time withdrew heartily cloyed with the subjects they had heard related.

From hence, they adjourned to another house no less eminent for midnight transactions.

They were ushered into a room, where they listened to some extraordinary discourse between Jack, the famous pimp master general, and Canter, an under-rate actor, well known amongst the ladies of pleasure, as they were carousing over a bottle in an adjoining apartment.

Mr. Canter stood warming his back by the fire, and Jack by his side, with a glass in his hand, saying, Egad sir, she's a very smart girl, and wonderfully engaging in company; I am sure she must
make

make a great deal of money.—Mr. Canter, so many years as I have known the town, I never remember any one man so generally in favour with the ladies as yourself—Whether it be owing to your attracting behaviour in life, I know not, but the encomiums I daily hear passed upon you, often induce me to envy your happiness.

Bless me, says Miss Dye Languish what a sweet fellow is that Canter ! I dreamt last night——but I will invite him to my lodgings —— Bridewell be my portion, cried Peggy Fanciful, if I would not risque the loss of my pension from Sir Peter Dolittle, for a single night with him.

I suppose, Sir, you have seen Peggy ; faith she's a charming creature, pity she's such a reprobate. She can mould a man to her mind as the potter does the clay, perhaps she's as fine a sized woman as the town affords, and then for a skin, eyes, and shape, she's the paragon of her sex.

Here the discourse was interrupted by the entrance of Mr. O'Hara, the poet ; Ha ! what my little Paddy, said Canter, did not I play my part in your last piece
to

to admiration ? Faith man like an angel ; and in the next I write, I'll adapt a part to your improving genius, that shall ensure you three encores, and an addition of twenty shillings to your weekly salary.

Well, but what became of the little Tit I recommended to you last night, was not she a delicate piece of flesh ? Arrah, the jade was well enough ; but she was plaguy coy at first, returned the bard ; she would not come to, till I promised to take her into keeping, and then we made a night at the Key Bagnio ; and a luscious hussy she is.— I suppose you came down Pat, says Canter ; not a doit, replied the other, I never pay my women with money ; if a lady of the theatre does me a favour, I recommend her to a part ; or puff for her in the News Paper ; if of the town, I write sonnets on her as the nonpariel of her sex, and thereby augment her fame, and consequently her income.

Faith Pat, you judge right, cried Canter, and for my part I always think it very well if I do them the favour, without paying for it.—As Mr. Canter was elaborately discussing the various arts of gallantry, and displaying the mystery of being

being a knave with reputation, there bounced into the room, a woman of a most commanding presence ; her features tho' large were regular, her eyes black and brilliant, her hair dark brown, her neck like polished ivory, and her heaving bosom tempting to the enraptured view. With eager fold, Canter embraced the lovely girl, and enquired by what means she knew he was in the house ; my dearest Tom, said she, I cannot possibly stay now, but Dick told me you was here, and I could not rest, till I feigned a pretence for leaving my company, for a short interview with my darling Canter.—But I must go back again, being engaged to captain Chintz, and Jack knows he is an excellent cull, if a woman can but please him.—A word more, said the favourite, before you go.—Take care to grant no favours, without first securing the reward ; unless you well know the character and fortune of the man with whom you engage.

Be not allured by a star or laced coat. I have known many persons of rank arrant bilks, and many plain men spend their money like princes. There's Lord Tinsel generally bilks his wench, whereas Mr. Sugarfops the plain cit in a frize coat

coat never gives less than two guineas.
 ——— The reason's plain, the former's as poor as a rat, and the latter as rich as Græsus.

Jack then broke in, and addressing himself to Mr. Canter; now Miss is present, said he, I have a remark to make, which I think may redound to her interest ——— Dolly Dowlass sounds but oddly; and I assure you a pretty name as often recommends a girl to company, as a pompous title to a new book, or a quack medicine.

Jack's remark was received very cordially, and it was agreed that she should immediately assume the name of Fanny Spencer. ——— This important business was no sooner settled, then a waiter entered the room out of breath, and assured them that the captain swore he would pink him, unless the lady was immediately produced.

The new christened miss Fanny obeyed the summons, and having kissed her favourite and his friend the poet, departed with the waiter, who introduced her immediately to the captain, and thereby escaped the effects of his resentment. Their pockets and the last bottle being drained, and Jack dismissed to wait on Colonel

Colonel Bluster, who was just come in with Commodore Bounce to make a night on't. — The tapers being well nigh spent, and the fire extinguished, a consultation was held by our gallants concerning the reckoning ; and as they were both low in cash, it was agreed to score up, and that Canter should lodge with the poet at his chambers in Lyons-Inn.

This settled, they departed cheek by jole ; and left the Spy and his companion to animadvert on the scenes they had beheld. — The sole remark the sage citizen made was, that, as on the stage attempts to expose vice have often proved, thro' the weakness of resolution and strength of passion, rather incentives to it, than dissuatives from it ; so in real life, as many by beholding vicious transactions, are corrupted in their principles, the utmost caution was necessary, on the part of Agrestis, to guard against their bewitching influence.

P A R T



PART II.

CHAP. I.

Transactions at the Court End of the Town, between the Hours of Twelve, and Two in the Morning.

THE Spy, having conducted Agrestis and the trusty Fidelio to the environs of St. James's, directed their attention to a spacious room, adorned with curious looking-glasses, finely illuminated, and exhibiting to the beholder a most brilliant appearance.

This said he, my friend is the pinnacle of human grandeur ; here resort the gay and gallant youth, on whom depends the future fate of their country ; hither too repair the infirm soldier, and superannuated statesman, to pass away an hour, in recounting former achievements in the field and cabinet, and ob-

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serving

serving the rising heroes, who are shortly to succeed them in those important departments—Mark with what complacency that gaudy spark views himself in the elegance of his attire.

How trippingly he passes from one end to the other, by his levity, indicating a mind at ease.——Surely, said Agrestis, he is arrived at that summit of happiness, so long sought for by philosophers in every age.

Perhaps he has just now generously extended his benevolence to indigent virtue, or rescued injured innocence from the oppressive spoiler.——Perhaps he has lately patronized genius, or given a sanction to neglected science. Perhaps he has provided for the education of some friendless orphan, or reared the drooping head of some disconsolate widow.——

Mistaken, but honest Agrestis, exclaimed the Spy, that youth is one, who having espoused a lady of considerable birth and fortune, commenced gamester, and has been a bubble to every sharper in town.

His afflicted consort died of grief within a twelvemonth, and as he persisted in his idle courses, regardless of his most
important

important concerns, in a few years, thro' play and the fraud of his steward, he was totally ruined.

Having a good genius improved by a finished education, a certain man of quality recommended him to the ministry, as a proper person to represent one of the boroughs at their disposal. — As the situation of affairs, and completion of their designs required the assistance of men, capable of sacrificing both their country and conscience; a petty borough in the west of England was commanded to return him, and he took his place in the grand assembly of the nation. — He proved a convenient tool, a handsome pension was assigned him and he now obeys his masters most implicitly; yet impudently dares to exult as if he neither had sold his honour nor liberty.

What a number of stars and fine ribbons! cried Fidelio, perhaps they are met to consult on the means of reducing the present exorbitant price of provisions, easing their country from some of the most oppressive taxes, or stopping the progress of vice and infidelity. From the joy that appears in every countenance, I am confirmed in my opinion.

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They have great reason to be thus elated, having just settled a most meritorious affair, replied Urbanus.—To make a party to go to the Opera in the evening, and from thence proceed to Mrs. C——s in S—S——, in order to pick each others pockets in a politer manner than that which is practised by the rabble.

Is it not surprising, said Agrestis, that the squaling of a Eunuch should be preferred to the well acted play of a Shakespear, a Johnson, a Fletcher or even the inferior dramatic writers? Formerly the great were the patrons of merit, and encouragers of genius, and those authors were the delight, of their country; but now the fashion is reversed, and reason and sense must submit to sound, froth, and impertinence.

Observe that table thronged with gamesters, and blush that England's interest is thus neglected, while her senators squander their time in company with sharpers and villains.———But to err is the lot of humanity.

How that old sychophant smiles on his patron in the corner, said the Spy! ——See, he puts his hand into his purse to reward him for his virtue, or perhaps
his

his treachery : How kind a look his Lordship deigns to cast upon him, which, added to the present he just now made him, will certainly give resolution to his laudable designs. Having thus spoken, Urbanus with Agrestis, and the honest Fidelio, proceeded up Albermarle-street, towards Grosvenor's-square, and the former, as they passed, made many pertinent remarks.

Observe that garret, said he, were the light is ; it contains an indigent clergyman, framing a speech to be delivered in the House to-morrow, by a certain member who being devoid of genius, for a paltry pittance, suborns others to write that which he passes on the House as his own, and thereby maintains the reputation of a man of abilities. But is it not derogatory to the character of the patron, to suffer the man whose genius he appropriates to himself, thus to live in want and misery ? demanded Agrestis. — Indeed, said the Spy, it is little better, for Sir William allows him but thirty pounds a year to maintain himself, his wife, and six children, which added to some trifles, arising from performing occasional duty in his function, is his sole livelihood.

They were both bred at the same college.——Sir William devoted his time to dress, and other fopperies, while Prudens, his friend, whose sole dependance was his industry, pursued his studies with indefatigable assiduity, and at length obtained a fellowship ; but having forfeited the income arising from the same, by marrying a young Lady of beauty and merit, without a farthing portion, he was reduced to the utmost straits, when his old friend took him into his service and generously allowed him the above mentioned pittance.

In that magnificent building, is an old man ready to expire ; and, O, shocking to humanity, his son who stands by his bedside, instead of supporting, is pulling the pillow from under his head. He is willing to hasten his journey, that he may become lord of all ? but he'll find himself greatly deceived in his expectations ; for the old curmudgeon, to purchase an exemption from justice on his former frauds and extortions, has bequeathed the greatest part of his fortune to hospitals, and other public charities.

In the course of the night's ramble, they met with two gentlemen, who seemed to have undergone a most severe
drubbing

drubbing, and whose fine clothes were bedaubed from head to foot. On enquiry, a by-stander related to them the following adventure.

Having reeled out of a tavern between the hours of twelve and one, as they were staggering home, a door stood invitingly open, two candles were placed in the hall, one lay carelessly in the middle of the floor, and the other stood on the top of a banister, whence it gave light upwards to a stair-case. To illustrate the sequel, it is necessary to observe that these gentlemen were Lord Rake, and Tom Squander; the former catching the latter by the sleeve, stopped his farther progress, while he inspected the premises of this enchanted castle, which he was resolved to storm.

After the necessary observations, he declared it was a Bagnio, and swore he would enter, and blow up the wenches, — Squander, who could see more clearly than his Lordship, endeavoured to dissuade him from his design; but my lord, being positive, denied his advice, and grasping him by the arm, they both tumbled into the house together, but had not advanced two steps, before they staggered different ways. — Some invincible

sible agent tripping up Squander's heels, and laying him flat on his face ; Zoons my Lord, says he, where the devil are you ? Some body has knocked me down. What art mad, Tom; replies my Lord ; why the devil a foul's in view, but a couple of horses, which stand at the door belonging to a chariot ; Upon this he arose, not without much difficulty. His hands and coat were much of a livery, and sent forth such a smell, that his Lordship was induced to think his companion had made that discharge which frequently results from fear and amazement, and indeed was confirmed in this opinion, from his resolution to withdraw.

Having in consequence of this incident, abandoned their enterprize, my Lord, in his retreat, received such a blow from a hand unseen on the side of the head, as laid his honour in the dust, and rendered his hands and clothes of the same colour with those of Tom Squander.

By this time they in some measure recovered their senses, and found, to their great surprize, their supposed Bagnio was a Tradesman's house, and their Chariot nothing more than a Cart, for carrying
away

away in the night, what might have proved a nuisance to the neighbours and passengers in the day. The blows were given by some of the myrmidons employ'd in that necessary office, and may be deemed the just reward of such a ridiculous curiosity, as nothing but the fumes of liquor would possibly excite.

Urbanus having thanked the stranger for the relation, observed to his friend the effects of drunkenness, which degrades the rational being to a level with the brute creation, and prompts to such absurd behaviour, as cannot but be attended with shame and confusion on sober reflection.

The next object which presented itself to the view of our Spy, and his friend was a gentleman in a sedan, attended by two servants, whose aspect indicated the highest degree of grief and anxiety.— Their worthy master had just received a mortal wound in a duel, occasioned by a dispute at a noted gaming table, not many miles from Grosvenor's square.

The Spy enquiring of the servants, whether the antagonist was in custody, or imprisoned? was informed, that he had made his escape, as the great men in company never interfere in such cases,
tho²

tho' the combatants have been their constant companions for years! or there may be the greatest inequality between them in point of rank. — Instead of great, said Agrestis, you must mean, very worthless men, for such I ever esteem those, who associate with sharpers.

Such is the state of the case in your honest opinion, reply'd the Spy, but through the prevalence of custom and fashion; the greatest scoundrel in town, if he dresses well, and plays deep, is a companion for the most dignified character in it; nobody pays the least regard to merit, at this end of the town. — The most lucrative employments here are pimping and gaming, and the best adepts in those noble sciences, will get most money, and attract the highest regard; indeed the latter of late has obtained the preference, because men of taste and fashion now treat their mistresses with as much contempt as their wives.

They had not walked many steps, before they were interrupted by three officers, one of whom, having got their servant Fidelio in a corner, began to amuse himself with that humane diversion, called

led Sweating. The honest countryman, brave by nature, tho' awkward in address remonstrated with the red-coated gentleman, on the cowardice of attacking a naked man with a sword, and indeed of shewing such a weapon to a man from whose aspect he might be assured of his being ignorant of the use of it.

The Hero who was an Hibernian, reviled him as an insolent scoundrel in attempting to call in question the behaviour of a Gentleman ; and threatened to stick him against the wall, unless he confessed his fault.

Agrestis and his friend, who were armed, resenting the ill treatment of the trusty servant, interposed, and notwithstanding their conviction of the illegality of duelling, insisted on satisfaction for so wanton an affront. The gentleman soon evinced his heroism by an ample confession, as well as solemn assurance of his being ignorant, to whom the man belonged.

The Spy, and his friend, then pursued their way, and the former made this remark on the last incident. You may rest assured, Agrestis, that cowardice and cruelty are inseparable companions ; and that true bravery will ever exert it-
self

Self in the defence of oppressed innocence and injured virtue.

In a short time they arrived at a certain square, where they heard a rattling of carriages, and saw a flare of flambeaux, as if the play or opera was just broke up, tho' it was then on the verge of two in the morning.

What means this mighty bustle, cry'd Agrestis ? It is a part of the company coming from a Route that is held at Lord Grooms, said the Spy ; tho' in all probability they will not break up till day light, as it is customary in this part of the world to substitute night for the day, to distinguish themselves from the vulgar, who unpolitely follow the dictates of nature.

We have adopted these fashions from our neighbours the French whose natural levity disposes them to the practice of every vice and folly, that wears the appearance of diversion. Crouds of our most conspicuous Blockheads flock over to Paris every year to improve—not their understandings. — I know not a man attached to foreign manners and fashions, but he has either a Weak head or a Bad Heart ; and you may depend upon it, that the Interest of England will
pro-

proportionably decline with the propensity of its leading men to the maxims and principles of its inveterate enemy.

Relaxation is necessary to unbend the mind from the cares and fatigues of human life ; but when it is pursued beyond the bounds of reason and virtue, its main end is perverted, and we are rather disqualified for the pursuit of its various duties. What then can we think of the British weal, when our very senators abjectly condescend, to mix in these enervating amusements, so incommensurable with that sublimity of mind which should ever characterise dignified personages ?

But let us proceed to other scenes, and by exploring human nature, confirm ourselves in the belief of that trite maxim,

“ That virtue is the only nobility. ”

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C H A P.

C H A P. II.

View of certain Night-Houses, with A Description of the Company.

BY this time our peripatetics tired with their walking, betook themselves to one of those convenient receptacles called Night-houses.-----
It was one of the politer kind, and situated near Whitehall, whither resorted the first order of irregulars.

On their entrance their noses were saluted with the fumes arising from hot coffee, punch and purl. In the bar sat a jolly dame, whose ruddy face indicated the effects of good living, as did her yawning those of her vigilance. The seats were lined with tenants of different professions, garbs, and complexions.——
Their conversation was as various as their features, and they exhibited a motley view of human nature.——The Spy observed that the attention of the company was principally engrossed by
two

two persons, who had the appearance of gentlemen's gentlemen.

These apes of dignity had been on a visit to some of their fraternity, and being warmed with their master's Burgundy, had left the remembrance of themselves, and assumed the consequence of those whom they served.——Their conversation chiefly turned upon Politics, in the terms of which they seemed to be well versed, nor were they unpractised in the significant look of those gentry, who storm castles, and take towns over a pipe of tobacco or a glass of Capillaire.

They ran through the whole proceeding of the last session of parliament, and expatiated very elaborately on the utility of several acts which had then passed both houses.

But they displayed their talents most remarkably on the pernicious proposal of abridging servants of their vails, which in their opinion was of the most destructive tendency to society, and wholly inconsistent with the regard due to industry and fidelity.

However they consoled themselves with having acquired a sufficiency to embark in business, should the detested proposal be generally

generally complied with. Thus, tho' at first by an affected parade, they endeavoured to conceal their situation in life, their zeal in the cause, extorted from them a confession, as well as exposed them to the ridicule of the company, some of whom having lampooned them very severely, they paid their reckoning and sneaked out amidst a general hiss. Though, said the Spy, I cannot approve the conduct of these people, in thus abruptly treating those two men, I think it should effectually warn others from affecting to be what they cannot; as such guise will never elude the penetration of the discerning, and ever expose them to the contempt and ridicule of the world around them.

Having cast his eyes about the room, Agrestis espied a youth whom he knew in the country, tho' he then appeared in a very different plight, on enquiry he found that from an unhappy attachment to expensive and irregular company, he had forfeited the favour of an indulgent master, who for his excentric conduct had turned him out of doors and abandoned him to an inhospitable world; when after spending his little pittance, he was often, for want of money, to pay
for

for his lodging, obliged to have recourse to one of these nocturnal caverns to shelter him from the inclemency of a very severe season.

On his relating this circumstance to the Spy, he was reminded, that though he should always cherish an aversion to vice, he should pity those over whom it prevailed ; particularly, if of his acquaintance, whom he should endeavour by his influence and example to reclaim from such courses, as generally end in disgrace and infamy.

From thence they proceeded Eastward, and turned into one of those convenient houses provided for the entertainment of chairmen, coachmen and others, whose avocations demand an early attendance. Though in this populous place, said the Spy, such houses are absolutely necessary, they are too often rendered subservient to iniquitous practices. They are frequently the resorts of idle vagrants, who frequent them in quest of prey, which they sometimes make of persons intoxicated with liquor, or ignorant of the town. Various are the arts they practise, and the schemes they concert to trepan the unwary ; and 'tis difficult for an inexperienced person to enter these premises without

without sustaining considerable injury, either in person or property ; for the truth of these observations, I need but appeal to the present scene, which I am certain will furnish such examples as will at once amaze and disgust you.

That Gentleman surrounded by a set of Irish chairmen, is a person of extensive bounty, and genuine humanity ; his principal foible, when in liquor, is profusion, of which those scoundrels take care to avail themselves by humouring his weakness, and thereby obtaining money to render themselves more beastly than they now appear to be. — How fulsome is their low adulation to a sober person ! How odious their awkward compliments to a man of breeding ! How disagreeable their cringing servility to a man of spirit ! Nature seems to have fitted their souls to the employment of their bodies ; and as they condescend to the office of brutes, to have rendered the instinct of the latter at least adequate to the reason of the former, according to the opinion of Otway, who seems to connect servility of body, with meanness of soul, in this line,

(burdens."

" Base minded, dull, and fit to carry

Observe that person sleeping, without either hat or wig ; when sober he will detest himself, and many days anxiety will pay the forfeit of one night's reveling. — He has probably been robbed by a villain, on whom he has conferred his bounty ; for nothing is more common in these places, then to repay kindness with injury, abuse good nature, and impose on generosity.

That poor fellow shivering in an old tattered waistcoat, I remember as airy a spark as any in town ; he had some property and a little understanding ; but having wasted the former, and perverted the latter, is become the most miserable of objects, and doubtless wishes he had never existed. — He applied but yesterday for relief to a woman on whom he had lavish'd great part of his fortune : the ungrateful flumpet not only rejected his petition, but upbraided him with that profusion, of which she had been the principal cause. But it is not to be wondered at — for the loss of chastity is generally attended with the desertion of every other virtue.

What clamour is that in the passage ? cry'd Agrestis : it is occasioned, said his friend, by two men who having
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resolution enough to withstand the sollicitations of some strumpets, are exposed to their abuse, because they cannot avail themselves of their compliance.

In most of the passages leading to these houses, you will be accosted by the lowest class of whores, who lay in wait to trepan such as chance may throw in their way, or decoy those, who being deprived of their reason, are open to their deceitful arts.

As the spy was thus descanting on the various characters around him, a formal kind of a figure, fixed his eye upon him with more than ordinary attention; this occasioned Urbanus to ask him, if he had no acquaintance with him.—— He reply'd, he had frequently seen him at the coffee-houses about the Exchange.

This gentleman was one of those, who having run thro' many professions without success, as merchant, brewer, &c. was at length, thro' a natural propensity to exert his wit, turned sharper.

The next object that presented itself to the view of the Spy and his friend, was a shabby fellow, in an old cocked hat, que wig, and rusty mourning coat. On enquiry, the gentleman appeared to be an itinerant Comedian, known by the
title

title of the Captain of the four Winds.—
 This appellation he required by his rapaid removal from place to place ; his baggage consisted of an old shirt, a pair of patched silk stockings, a ragged handkerchief and rusty foil.

As he excited the laughter of the company, Agrestis expressed his indignation that the distresses of one man should be the source of mirth to others. Your principle I applaud, said Urbanus ; but that fellow deserves neither pity nor relief, and is a just object both of contempt and ridicule : of the former, for his excessive ingratitude and injustice to the numerous friends, who have from time to time relieved him ; of the latter, for his intolerable vanity in assuming a consequence so incompatible with his situation of life.

But turn your eyes from that worthless being, to a more dispicable object ; that young fellow in the opposite box, who is carousing with a company of blackguards. He is descended from a reputable family, was genteely educated, and placed to a profitable business. But thro' the prevalence of idleness on the one hand, and a despicable pride on the other, he neglects his employ, saunters
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from alehouse to alehouse, and is never so happy, as when he can give law to a number of the lower class, with whom he spends night after night in these houses, instead of preparing himself by seasonable repose, for the business of the ensuing day; in the morning he staggers home to his disconsolate wife, and helpless little ones; and so lost is the wretch, even to the feeling of consanguinity, that neither the entreaties of the former, nor cries of the latter, can divert him from his destructive course, which he pursues without the least restraint or remorse.

But let us quit this scene of noise, hurry, and impertinence, and repair to the city, where we may probably find some transactions worthy our notice.

They then passed on without meeting any thing particular, till they arrived at a certain house near Newgate Street, which, as being one of the nocturnal receptacles, they entered, in order to gratify their speculative disposition.

They were hardly seated, before they were saluted by a bluff fellow (whose blown cheeks, and prominent belly indicated good living) with "coffee or tea? Wines or spirituous liquors of any kind, Gentlemen, do you want beads, pray? Shall

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I make you a nice toast, my masters:—
 Make room there for the Gemmen.”—
 The Spy could not but stare at this voluble and officious attendant, and to anticipate his farther impertinence, ordered coffee, as most agreeable at that season.—This company was a very different turn from the last, yet afforded as many entertaining and instructive remarks.

The conversation of the former was obscene and frothy, but that of the present, grave and philosophic. ——— The Spy and his friend, received not a little pleasure from the ingenious discussion of some intricate points in natural philosophy, by a person of very mean appearance, and could not but express a sincere concern, that he either neglected his talents, or the world his merit, as his abilities certainly entitled him to a much superior figure in life than that which he then made. The unhappy cause however, they found arose from the former. This man being devoted to idleness and sloth, never exerted his talents, but as the means of obtaining a bare subsistence, and as he was wholly regardless even of decency, a trifling pittance supplied his wants, and was therefore the extent of his ambition.

Thus

Thus immerfed in fupine indolence, he paffed many years in obfcurity, and neglected thofe parts which improved would have acquired him refpect, during life, and tranfmitted his fame with eclat to pofterity.

The perfon with whom he converfed was of a fimilar difpofition, but having the advantage in point of fortune, made a more decent appearance, tho' by his garb it was eafy difcernable, he was no friend to gaiety.

Indeed men of learning are feldom over nice in the decoration of their perfons, perfuaded that the ornamenting of the nobler part, has a prior claim to their attention.

As their difcourfe turned on the nicer points of fpeculation, it was not regarded by the major part of the company ; tho' the Spy and his friend were particularly attentive, efpecially as they were ftrict advocates for Revelation, and the others feemed, from various hints, inclined to favour the tenets of Deifm. However Urbanus liftened to their pofitions and inferences concerning topics far beyond human comprehension, and as it was no pedantry to display his acquirements

ments before men of literature broke out into this rapturous exclamation.—

O, Finis, fine fine manens ! fine origine,
origo !

This occasioned an intercourse, and as they agreed in the grand essentials of religion, which consist in piety and benevolence ; they dropped that subject as too grave for the present occasion and conversed with much freedom, on Human Nature in general.

Agrestis who listened most attentively to their discourse could not but express his surprise, that persons endowed with such perspicuity of discernment and rectitude of judgment, should be thus enslaved by the meanest passions.

I honour your remark, said Urbanus, as an infallible proof of the goodness of your heart ; but if you pursue the study of mankind, you will find in most, a vast difference between their principles and practices and that the major part act in absolute repugnance to the very convictions of their reason and conscience ; a strong instance of the depravity of human nature, as well as convincing proof of the

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necessity of a Supreme Agent to assist in the very exertion of those powers, with which we are endowed.

Upon the whole ; from these scenes we may learn, that an adherence to the rules of temperance and modesty, is the incumbent duty of reasonable beings ; and that a deviation therefrom cannot but be attended with shame and infamy.

But it is time to repose, let us therefore to our respective abodes, and defer our remarks to a further opportunity.

C H A P III.

Transactions at certain noted Bagnios.

THE Spy desirous that his country friend should be privy to every scene worthy of notice in this extensive metropolis, conducted him to Goodman's-fields, as a spot which afforded many remarks.

Agrestis being armed with good instruction, and all necessary caution, had in some measure divested himself of his
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rural bashfulness, and assumed that degree of confidence, which is necessary to carry a man through the various scenes of this busy and changeable state of existence ; so that he was capable of making pertinent strictures on the occurrences which beset them, during the future course of their nocturnal progress.

Ranging thro' G——'s F———s they stepped into the T——'s H——d and in a large room, adjoining to the bar found seated at a corner table, a set of jolly, rough hewn sons of Neptune, whose ruddy faces seemed to dare hardship, and bid defiance to every danger.——Bumpers of punch went briskly round, joy appeared in every countenance, and they seemed resolved to drown care in a flowing bowl.

The Spy soon found by their dialect they were masters of ships, who resorted thither, whenever they were disposed to sacrifice to Bacchus and Venus. After many toasts had gone round, they rang the bell, ordered the drawer to replenish, and supply them not only with liquor, but wenches, who came, bouncing in, on a certain summons, with as many airs, as the whores in the Opera, and ranged themselves in order by their respective cul-
lies.

lies. The regale was now complete, and the Tars were as happy, as liquor and love could make them.

By the rapture and extasy of this company of jolly fellows, said Agrestis, one would imagine they were borne above themselves, and thought one night's enjoyment an adequate compensation for the toils of a voyage. You conjecture truly, returned the Spy, these honest Tars have the highest sensation of indulgencies, because so generally deprived of them, for which reason they spare no cost to gratify their desires, and frequently lavish that in a week, which is the product of a year's labour on the briny ocean.

But observe that grave old gentleman, who is sitting by himself over his bott'e with looks as demure, as if in a sanctuary. He put on those boots, to impose on his family through pretence of going out of town ; but this is the extent of his journey, and if he rides, it will not be on a quadrupede. Though I apprehend his tottering carcase, will not bear much jolting.—But there are more means of recreation than one, and his obliging landlady will furnish him with suitable entertainment.

But

But see ! the waiter whispers him, and he retires ; his flame just now whisked through the bar, into a little snug room behind, whither the old Letcher is following her.——That little ogling hussy is versed in all the arts of her trade, and has cunning enough to fleece the greatest miser in Christendom.

As she is young and handsome, she is the flame of those dotards, whose desires outlive their ability, and who always pay for what they cannot do.———When the curmudgeon is fated, he will sneak home, and curse the gross passion, which he has gratified at such vast expence ; for such is his avarice, that he almost denies himself the necessaries of life, and has not purchased a new coat since his wedding suit.

This will ever be the case, observed Agrestis, where an Equilibrium of the passions is not maintained ; for we cannot indulge one desire immoderately, without retrenching the rest ; and lust and avarice are so opposite, that they cannot rule together without perpetual contention ; and administering a swarm of plagues to the slave who is under their subjection.

That smart young lad also waits for a doxey.——Having toyed with his master's

ter's daughter, till desire became urgent, he has repaired hither to extinguish that flame, which she by admitting him to indecent liberties has raised, but cannot indulge consistent with her reputation. The prevailing foible of the young women of this country, is an affectation of levity, and negligence of dress, which indicates an intention of prompting desire; and ladies of this stamp can never with propriety be offended at that behaviour, to which themselves are the very incentives.

If a woman is virtuous from principle, or interest, she should act correspondent with the maxims of modesty, and rather check, than encourage every inordinate folly of youthful ardour.

That old fellow sneaking out at the door is a Parson, whose austere look and devout appearance, make him pass for a saint; but as the flesh will sometimes overcome the spirit, the doctor on those occasions you find, has no aversion to a little amorous dalliance with a pretty girl in a corner.

That formal fellow, with the strait hair, who skulked out with such affected privacy was a pious Tallow-chandler; but having been wrought upon by the
noisy

noisy harangue of a modern sectary in this neighbourhood, he joined the brotherhood, and soon left the melting cellar for the Rostrum, where he bellows out hell and damnation against all, who will not embrace his fanatical tenets.—It has long been matter of dispute with me, whether these ridiculous ranters were not more knaves than fools? Agrestis.—However they may expend their breath, with roaring out Anathemas; they always take great care to fill their pockets.—No wonder that these gentry are continually exclaiming against good works, when they practice them so little.

By visiting these scenes of iniquity, you become an eyewitness to the hypocrisy and dissimulation of mankind, vices which prevail amongst all ranks and degrees, vices more predominant than any other, because as most persons affect a good name, they endeavour to conceal their foibles from the public eye.

But let us to the politer part of the town, and observe the prevalence of the same passions in a more exalted sphere of life.

They then called a coach, and were soon transported to that circle which claims a superiority in those amusements,
which

which are adapted to the entertainment of the gay and polite part of the world. Tho' it exceeded the hour of three, the nymphs and swains were still paying their adoration at the shrine of Bacchus, and the choice spirits were in the meridian of their glee. Chairs were posted one after another, to convey the ladies from their lodgings to the arms of their doating admirers, who were waiting their arrival at the different places of entertainment, with the utmost impatience.

The first object that claimed the attention of the Spy and his friend, was a very beautiful girl that entered a certian bagnio under the Piazza, noted for its elegance, and dignified company.

As the curiosity of Agrestis was now excited to the utmost pitch, no expence was spared to gratify it; they therefore entered this magnificent brothel, and fixed themselves in the most convenient place, to observe all who came in or out.

In the bar was a jolly dame, whose breath favoured much of the richest cordials, which had bloated her cheeks, and dispersed a ruddy hue over her countenance.

Next

Next this lump of iniquity, sat a smart wench in character of bar maid ; she was a cast off lady ; but having put immense sums into the bawd's coffers, she now repays the obligation by maintaining her in the house.

They were not long seated, when they observed a gay spark come out of a chair, and in a tone of authority, call for a room. This was his usual hour of attending on the rites of Venus ; for as he generally sleeps all day, it was the same in point of distance of time with him, as the evening with the man of sobriety and regularity.—The gentleman's name, I am told, said the Spy, is Puff, but he had added the title of Sir Peter to it, which together with a laced coat, and a feigned story of an uncle, immensely rich, whose death he hourly expected, is of great service to him amongst the women.—His honour has been detected in many despicable tricks, and lately brought a very pretty girl to this place, whom he regaled, and afterwards enjoyed.—When the time of departure approached, he pressed her hand, expressed the utmost concern that he could not at that time make her ample compensation for the favour she had conferred upon him, and

and therefore intreated her to appoint another meeting with him, till which he should be the unhappiest of mortals.

The girl, who had been often thus amused, conceived the design, and determining to avail herself of the present moment, acquiesced with Sir Peter's proposal, but did not fail to assure him, that as her circumstances at that time were but indifferent, a small present would be of service to her. — The pretended Knight to avade present compliance, promised generous things, at the appointed interview. — I hope Sir, returned the poor girl, you will consider, that all the little wealth I had, was my virtue, and that therefore some little present, till I see you again, will be very acceptable ; for I really stand in need of it.

This importunity, said Sir Peter, I cannot withstand ; you shall have a small piece of gold ; I am very sorry I cannot spare more at present. — He then put his hand into his pocket, and startled as if amazed, crying out. — No, by Jupiter, 'tis gone. — What, have you lost any thing, cry'd the girl ? What, you want to plead ignorance ? But it won't do, flam me. — Upon this he called up two of the waiters, and insisted on the girl's strip-

stripping immediately, if she produced not the purse, which he swore she had stolen.

The girl then protested her innocence, wept bitterly, threw herself on her knees at his feet, and entreated him not to expose her in so gross a manner ; for tho' she had lost her virtue, her character as to honesty remained unsullied. To enforce her entreaty, she seiz'd him by the sleeve with such force, that the cuff fell upon the ground, and the purse dropt, to the joy of the girl, and astonishment of the waiters.

She treated him with the contempt he deserved ; the scoundrel pocketed the affront, walked down to the bar, paid the reckoning, and made his exit with an air of unconcern, peculiar to this sort of gentry, who assume a parade to perpetrate every kind of villainy.

Observe, said the Spy, that elderly gentleman, in black velvet, who wears good humour pictured in his face ; 'tis Sir Christopher Careless. He is a man of immense fortune, and one of the best benefactors to the Pimps that frequents this seat of Venus.——He's always De-gageé, disposed for any thing that may be proposed—together with Sir Solomon Spend-

Spendthrift; he entertained last week twelve of the finest women on the town; and the expence to Pimp, House and Presents, did not amount to less than fourscore Pieces.

Sir Christopher's an eternal Bubble; for tho' he wants not understanding, such is his negligence of temper, that he will not give himself trouble to enquire, whether a demand made upon him is reasonable or unreasonable.

Such persons, cried Agrestis, alone, one would think, resort to these places of luxury and extravagance, where they devise every means of expence, study profusion, and exceed, if possible, desire itself.

The lady that now enters is one of the most celebrated courtezans in this metropolis, and has had the honour of obliging some of the principal personages in the kingdom.—Her name is Lucy Lofty, she was the daughter of an obscure mechanic, and obliged to drudge through the menial offices of domestic life.

As ambition is the ruling principle of mankind, she considereth her situation far inferior to her supposed merit, and determined

terminated by a bold essay to make a shining figure in the beau monde.

Lucy had often viewed herself in the glass, and like Narcissus became enamoured of her own person ; so that she could not but curse her hard fate, in being destined to the rough work of a dirty scullion.

She at length determined to prosecute her design, and being arrayed in her best apparel, one Sunday noon made a sally into the park, and attracted the notice of a wealthy old gentleman, who stood in need of high provocatives to stimulate a depraved appetite. — The gentleman accosting her with many encomiums on her personal beauty, informed her that he had something to communicate greatly to her advantage, and would acquaint her by his servant with the time and place of interview.

Lucy embraced the favourable opportunity, and by an arch smile signified her consent. — Before she surrendered to the desires of the amorous dotard, she demanded her own terms, which were immediately granted ; so that she at once commenced the fine lady, and lived to the excess of pomp and luxury. But to

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be the property of one man agreed not with Lucy's sprightly temper, so that being detected in an intrigue with a youthful gallant, a separation ensued between the old gentleman and his charmer; but not without her having previously obtained a handsome settlement.

As merit cannot long be concealed; an incredible number of the first personages, both old and young soon offered incense at her shrine, and she rode triumphant on a splendid car, through all the fashionable scenes of vice and folly. She has maintained a consequence a considerable number of years; but if I can see into futurity, contempt, disgrace, disease, and poverty will close a life of lust, ambition, vanity, and extravagance.— But let us turn our back, said the Spy, upon this scene of dissipation and folly, more ludicrous and absurd.

C H A P.

C H A P. IV.

View of several Famous and Infamous Houses, between the Hours of Two and Three in the Morning.

OUR peripatetics were now at a stand which way to move, till the Spy, proposed the renowned Mr. M——'s in R———st———, as a place which would furnish many useful remarks.

Under the conduct of their sage guide, Agrestis, and his trusty servant entered this refuse of debauchery, which receives the outcast of Bagnios, and other receptacles of lust, whose sober landlords thus early retire to rest.

Before they well had seated themselves, they were accosted by a couple of mortal angels, who by their appearance, seemed after rumpling their feathers in a hot engagement, to have just rectified their disordered plumes, to make ready for a fresh encounter. ——— With their usual effrontery, they each helped themselves to a glass, and in a short time grew so
very

very mercurial, that they launched out into their accustomary wantonness, and uttered as many hideous oaths, as you could expect from a Thames bargeman, or Boatswain's mate.

The spy finding they were veterans in the service of Bacchus and Venus, by plying them briskly with liquor, obtained a genteel account of this early assembly. The most expert of these ladies, was Polly Brazen, who addressing herself to Urbanus and his friend, told them, she could discover a new humour, which they had never heard of.

That grave looking fellow, said she, is one of that class in the black school of Sodom, who by proficient in the science of debauchery are termed flogging cullies. These unnatural beasts pay an exorbitant price for being scourged on the posteriors.

During the time of discipline, they beg for mercy like a soldier on the parade, and beseech forbearance; but the more importunate they seem for lenity, the feverer vapulation the woman is to exercise, till they find by their brutal extasy, when to withhold the instrument of correction. The astonished Agrestis and his old servant, in a rapture of amazement, expressed
their

their concern that human nature could thus degenerate into brutality, nay, exceed it in odious practices, repugnant to the very instinct of nature itself. —

Detest, but wonder not, my honest unsuspecting friend, said the Spy, for where lusts prevail unrestrained, 'tis inconceivable to what enormous practices it hurries it's abject slaves.

Observe that ruby complexioned lady, who seems somewhat declined into the vale of years. — She was once an eminent toast among the bloods and bucks, but having impaired her beauty and constitution by an excessive attachment to venery and geneva, she first turned procureess, then set up bawd at large, and now rivals the town in ebriety and extortion.

That tall genteel lass, who skims her eye round the company is Fanny Flirt, she raques herself on the number of her acquaintance, and idly arrogates a consequence from being notoriously infamous. She cannot behold a handsome man without desire, or a beautiful woman without envy.

In short she is a slave to her passions, a subjection which cannot but terminate in deformity, diseases, and penury. —

Those mean looking fellows, whose aprons indicate their fervility, are journeymen of different callings, who when they have received their wages on Saturday night, frequently lavish them on whores, instead of purchasing a weekly provision for their families, which are now destitute of the common necessities of life.

Inhuman wretches, said the honest Fidelio, thus to squander the fruits of their labour, unaffected by the cries of those who are most near, and should therefore be most dear to them.——

Recommend to me the industrious peasant, who, unknown to these destructive places enjoys his little earnings in sweet society, with his provident dame, and healthful children, whose countenances indicate honesty and temperance, and the salutary effects of following the dictates of nature.

Your reflections are just, honest Fidelio, said the Spy, but such persons as these never permit themselves a moment's serious thought concerning their present state ; and wisely give up all pretensions to another world, so they can but gratify their appetites and passions.—— And are there rational beings, demanded, Agrestis,

Agrestis, who disbelieve the existence of a God? — No, replied his companion; those gentlemen, who are dignified with the title of Free-thinkers endeavour to disbelieve: but when death stares them in the face, you will hear them in the agonies of despair implore the mercy of that Supreme Power, whose existence they have impiously affected to deny. — But let us from this low scene, and take a view of the transactions of high life at this early hour,

The guide then conducted his companion to a certain tavern, near P—d Street, eminent for the most capital assassinations and intrigues in town. — Just as they entered, a gentleman and a lady made their exit in two sedans, and the Spy in consequence of a perfect knowledge of them, related the following circumstances of their lives and characters. The gentleman, whose name is Wouldbe, is the son of an eminent and wealthy clothier in the county of Berks. His father having given him a good education, removed him to college, not that the young gentleman had any inclination to learning, but it was the fashion to be a student, and no man affects more
taste,

taste, who in reality possesses so little.

His father dying when he was about two and twenty, left him a very handsome fortune, upon which he threw off the restriction of a college life, so highly accomplished, that he was absolutely incapable of Spelling his mother tongue. A reflection on the number of block-heads that our universities annually send forth, reminds me of a very sensible question lately proposed for discussion at the Robin Hood. The Querist demanded, whether it would not be proper, prior to the admission of persons to the clerical function, to examine whether they could read or not? I am sorry to say, that few of them are more capable of reading the Liturgy, or delivering a sermon, than the great Johnson seems to have been of criticising upon the works of the much greater Shakespear.

The best idea I can give you of Would be is, that he his Rich; if you enquire as to his virtues, I am dumb. — He is as positive as ignorant, no man is so busy the first night of a new play, or more ready to anticipate its damnation; though he knows no more of character,
sen-

sentiment, diction or action, than the candle snuffer.

His dresses are gaudy, but never of a piece, because men of genius are generally negligent. — In winter he fears to walk, lest the inclemency of the air, might hurt, or the fall of a title level him; in summer, lest warmth of the weather should inflame his blood, or his neighbour's mad dog seize him by the collar.

His library is well furnished, he knows all the titles of the books, but is very superficially acquainted with the contents. He's an absolute stranger to the great arts of being silent, and of discoursing; and having two or three common place stories, introduces them to every company without the shadow of a reason.

He frequently makes flagrant mistakes in language, such as *I have not got none*; Lady Lear is one of the *most finest* and *sensiblest girls*, amongst all the *toasts* is in town. — Yet with all these ridiculous qualities, he has the art of passing for what he is not, and in spite of his profound ignorance, and odious conceit, is thought a man of genius and learning by the servile mob, and passes for a man of gallantry.

gallantry with the silly women.—And wherefore ?———for the reason before alledged—he is rich.

Lydia Lear (for that is the name of the Gentleman's favourite Lady, with whom he is just departed for St. James's Bagnio) is the Daughter of a Publican, and though of mean extraction endowed with many amiable qualities both of mind and person.———She is charitable to a fault, and would sell her very clothes to relieve an object of distress, nor does any person retain a more grateful sense of favours conferred. But with these virtues are blended the vices of drinking and swearing, in which she equals any porter, coachman, or chairman, from Hyde park, to Whitechappel.———She is wild, inconsiderate, noisy, fond of every man she sees, and variety is the soul of her life.———She gets much money, but squanders it upon two or three hangers on, who being worn out in the service, live upon the prostitution of others.———She had lived with several gentlemen of quality and fortune, but lost their favour, and her passion for variety, as she shortly will that of Mr. Wouldbe, whose conceit cannot

cannot bear a rival in the esteem of his mistress.

In this place, continued Urbanus, are carried on many intrigues between city ladies and their gallants! it being very convenient for such purpose, on account of its remote situation, and the arch method of the landlord, to conceal the amours of his customers.—He was an eminent pimp at the R—e, where, having acquired a sum of money by his skill in the profession, he sat up a petty Tavern; but being, thro' his irregular proceedings, obliged by the magistrates to quit the same, retired to a certain city in the west, whence for renewing his old practices, he was expelled, and obliged to have recourse to the same in this part of the town.

His name is too well known to need mentioning, and his character too notorious to require further description.—But lest your mind should be captivated with any of the scenes to which I have introduced you, and what I have already related become rather an incentive to vice, than lesson of virtue; I shall endeavour to display such characters of women of the town, that cannot (if properly

perly attended to) but effectually divert you from any fatal attachment to those alluring objects.

C H A P. V.

General and particular Description of Women of the Town.

URBANUS, having paused a little, began to entertain his friends in their departure home, with the following relation. I remember, my dear Agrestis, a friend lately complained to me that he was engaged in the pursuit of an amour, to which his mind was so devoted, that he could attend to no other business. — He confessed that the object of his passion was neither maid, wife, nor widow, but a woman, who tho' extremely beautiful, was yet a mercenary strumpet.

This, he assured me was the source of his disquietude, being desirous of casting off the fatal attachment, but ignorant of the means necessary for the regaining his liberty, and dethroning, so infamous a passion. — He told me he had
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applied to several men of reputed experience ; but all their prescriptions proved ineffectual.

For this reason he earnestly entreated, that I would point out the means, by which he might be exempted from so perplexing a circumstance. — Affected with his piteous case, I thus addressed him. — Know then, that you are now infected with a most dangerous disease, of which you cannot recover, but by undergoing many difficult operations. For, my good Sir, every man who is in love is sick, nay, not only sick, but a very slave and madman, — I speak of unlawful love ; for it is a virtue to love God, our parents, country, wife and children.

Your case is very different, for you are in the pursuit of Unlawful Love, which, according to the description of Seneca in one of his tragedies, is nothing else, than a certain force or great energy of mind ; a heat of youth, begot by luxury and idleness, nursed, and cherished by ease and plenty. — This robs a man of his understanding ; perverts his judgment, stupifies his senses and extinguishes his reason.

A Lover of this kind is transformed by an unhappy Metamorphosis, into another man, he neither speaks nor acts as he was wont to do.—You say your mistress is beautiful, and charming in your eye ; but do you think she will be always thus beautiful and charming ?—Beauty is fleeting, and the women who in the evening enchants you, in the morning may affright you.

A women's beauty, unadorned with chastity, is of no price ; and you pursue her not for her chastity, you are not enamoured of her virtue, but her looks ; and those alas ! have but a fading glory, a flower that like a rose expands its beauty in the morning, and languishes with the evening sun.

But not to multiply words, the woman you doat on is not yours alone, nor can her love be so confined to you, but that she has some to bestow on other admirers.—In such a woman there's no stability, no constancy : she who seems fond of you to day, tomorrow will caress another ; perhaps ridicule your dotage the moment you have left her.—A woman who admits of criminal passions, is an imperfect being, various, fallacious, subject to a thousand turbulent pas-

passions, without fear, without piety.—
 But perhaps you are not wholly taken up
 with the enjoyment of your mistresses
 person, but pleased to look upon, and
 hear her talk.—Do her looks carry in
 them any thing so transporting, that
 you cannot find their equal ? That much
 admired form may be ruffled by a fever ;
 those sprightly eyes, which now dart
 such killing glances, may soon become
 beamless fires ; that mouth, which now
 breaths odoriferous sweets, may soon
 emit a nauseous stench ; that neck, now
 erect with stately pride, may soon bow
 under the pressure of penury ; and all
 that lovely body soon become a shrivel-
 led, dry, and sapless trunk.

Let these considerations impress your
 mind and cut off the fallacious promises
 of hope.—Fly from her, before she flies
 from you, for it is much better to con-
 temn a thing than lose it. The only cure
 for this infatuation, is a persuasion and con-
 viction of the mind, that love fixed on im-
 proper objects is the worst of evils.—
 Think of the fickle temper of women,
 think of the loss of your time than
 which nothing is more precious ; think
 of the waste of your fortune, which is
 not easily repaired, and finally remember,
 that

that life is short and should be spent in nobler pursuits.

In this manner I harangued my friend, said Urbanus, and my sincere efforts were attended with the desired effect, for from that very hour he deserted the perfidious fair, and behaved like a man of reason and reflection.—From what I have observed in the course of our nocturnal progress, returned Agrestis, I have the utmost cause, to concur with you both in the description and admonition, and shall make the latter the rule of my future conduct.—Then my labour will be amply compensated, Agrestis, said the Spy—but as there are no rules without exception, so some women on the town are patterns to the rest, in that they display many amiable and commendable qualities.

The lady who last entered the tavern in P——d Street, deserves the highest encomiums in many respects.—Her name is Charlotte Welldon; her stature is tall, she is extremely genteel, her eyes are brisk and piercing, her mouth small, and all her features elegant, her air is fine, her address polite, and her taste in dress indisputably genteel; she is a woman of good sense, but talks less
than

than most of her sex, except she is perfectly well acquainted with her company ; then few women can be more agreeably entertaining,

She owed her birth, as well as excellent education to an eminent merchant in Austin Friars, who forced her to marry the son of a rich Banker, that having fallen in love with her, asked her without any fortune.

He was not only an idiot, but incapable of fulfilling the rites of Matrimony.—In vain did she solicit her father to release her from this purgatory. He threatened to disclaim her, if she persisted, and he kept his word. At length she obtained a divorce ; but as she brought him no fortune, had but forty pounds a year allowed her for a maintenance, nor would her enraged parent ever increase it.

She took a milliners shop, neat Holborn Bars ; and a handsome young fellow, who lodged in the house, paid his addresses to her, and at length obtained the surrender of her virgin charms.

He soon grew tired of her, though she loved him to distraction ; and at length stripped her of almost every thing she was worth, so that she was obliged to

shut up shop, and with what little she could save, set out for York, where she threw herself under the protection of an aunt, who humanely permitted her to lye-in in the house, and afterwards recommended her to nurse a child for a lady of quality, with whom she came up to London; where my lady's eldest son persuaded her to quite her place, and took her into keeping; but being likewise soon cloyed, sold her to a young lord for a bottle of Burgundy.

She has since passed thro' many hands and her fate seems much to be lamented, for had she moved in a more elevated sphere of life, she would have cut an amiable figure; and if you except her present unfortunate state, few women possess more exalted virtues: as she has done actions, that might put precise, penurious chastity to the blush.

This character, said Agrestis corresponds with a remark, which occurred at our outset, that there are harlots, women of strict honour! the relation has much affected me, and it would afford me the highest satisfaction, could I contribute towards the alleviation of her sorrows, and settling her in an agreeable situation in life.

True

True, said Urbanus ; but instances of this kind are very rare, for when virtue is once lost, every amiable quality generally deserts the unhappy fair.———
I know a certain fine woman, whose character in life amply illustrates this remark, and as the design of our nocturnal progress is to descant upon human nature, I presume the relation will not be deemed tedious.

The lady's name is Sally Ploughman, she was descended from poor parents, who dying when she was eleven years old, she was taken into the service of a neighbouring farmer. Here she drudged on four or five years, happy as conscious innocence could make her, till at length her sparkling eye and ruddy complexion raised the curiosity of a recruiting captain, and obliged him to speak to her.

He found her innocent and credulous ; but his lace coat soon took possession of her heart, and his smooth tongue of her faith : in consequence of which, having made the soldier happy, and herself as wise as her mother, she forsook the farmer, and attended her gallant to his quarters.

Here

Here she soon became acquainted with the world, and began to distinguish man from man, and being rather excentric in her amours, was dismissed the captain's service, and cohabited with a gentleman of fortune, who brought her up to London, to see the Beau Monde. — By frequenting the Theatres, she became acquainted with several ladies of her profession, whose principles she soon imbibed, and her corruption was compleated; for tho' she had lost her chastity before, she preserved her moral honesty, and had some other virtues.

Her keeper soon after having detected her in an intrigue, gave her a short reprimand, and fifty guineas in her pockets; bidding her provide for herself in the best manner she could. — In this situation, she applied to the honest man I lately described, who introduced her to polite company, where she got much money.

At length she contracted a virulent disorder, and was obliged to seek the aid of a surgeon, who stripped her of every penny, and reduced her to the necessity of applying to a bawd, but her face being known to the sparks of the town

town, who avoided her correspondence for fear of contamination, her last resource for a livelihood was to sell oranges at the playhouses.

In this low ebb of fortune, she took possession of the heart of Sir John Manly, who took her into keeping, and allowed her a very genteel maintenance.

But she pursued her inclinations without restraint and privately admitted to her embraces, one of the figure dancers at the Opera, till Sir John having incontrovertible proof of her infidelity, discharged her as a vile ingrate, and she returned to her former life of dissipation, riot, and obscenity.

From hence amongst numberless instances, continued the Spy, it is evident that when once a woman launches into this abandoned way of life, and becomes hardened in iniquity, she obliterates all reason from her mind, and is a stranger to reflection. — If a man raises her from the ebb of poverty, to which her infamy has sunk her, and make her the companion of his bed and board, notwithstanding her repeated protestations of fidelity, you find her led by the ingratitude

gratitude of her heart, when fixed in affluence, to forget her solemn promises, follow the directions of her loose desires, and daily abuse the generosity of her benefactor.

This life of a woman of this stamp, is an eternal round of deception, a deception of a double kind, not only of the credulity of him, who weakly caresses her, but of himself; for she at length falls a prey either to excess of luxury, or the severe attacks of a nauseous distemper. — Her loose behaviour at last throws her on the common, where having spread the infection, she miserably perishes in an hospital or workhouse. But let us close our remarks with a morning's tour through the town.

C H A P.

C H A P. VI.

General View of the Town between
the Hours of Three and Five in
the Morning.

THE votaries of Venus and Bacchus now began to depart, the temples of the latter to sacrifice the shrine of the former.—The taverns are discharging, their sinful burthens in close curtained chairs, while the bagnios await the arrival of the nymphs and swains ; to consummate those joys, which were begun over the bottle.

The streets echo with sound of chimney sweepers, and clattering of carts laden with fruit for the different markets. The yawning Son of Debauchery are reeling home, stupified with liquor, and the hackneyed strumpet grown hagged with watching, repairing to her miserable cot.

The early part of the regular world begin to prepare for business, while the
excentric

excentric mortal is but just thinking of repose.

The Spy and his friend were sometime at a stand which way to move ; at length Urbanus proposed a visit to Billingsgate, as a place capable of affording great diversion, thro' the various humours of the maritime mobility.——Accordingly they steered their course thither, and in a narrow lane stumbled on the threshold of a gloomy cavern which they no sooner entered, than they heard a number of female tongues engaged in promiscuous tattle, with as much eagerness, as a party of ladies over the tea table.—Their chief clamour was against the fashion of French night caps, and long sacks, which concealed the face, leg, and foot.

“ Lord help my poor masters, said one of them, they look as if they had disobliged their wives or their landladies, and they would not let them in to night.” They then tumbled into another company of medley mortals.——One by his appearance seemed to have been stripped of his money at a gaming table, another, as if the gray mare were the better horse, and had denied him entrance for keep-
ing

ing late hours ; a third as if just come to age, and had got his means into his own hands ; but thinking the day too short for his fortune, had resolved the night should make up the deficiency in lengthening out his pleasures.

While the Spy and his friend were making their remarks, there entered a spruce blade with a pretended wife, who enquiring when the Gravesend Boat went off, and being told about five ; affected weariness and desired to lie down for an hour or two.—The pious landlady replied, “ by all means; Sir, we have several couple in bed that wait for the tide as well as you.”———So they were immediately lighted to new joys.

Having thus amused themselves with these scenes of novelty ; they turned down towards the market, where their ears were saluted with the harmonious sounds of scolding fish women, reprobate porters, and upstart salefmen.———

From this place, said the Spy, the sons of luxury are supplied with sea dainties ; it furnishes part of the most elegant entertainments, and tho’ at present so offensive to the smell, its commodities are suited to the most delicate palate.

O

As

As they passed to the westward, they were shocked by beholding many of those objects of misery, who being destitute both of money and shame, are the nocturnal tenants of shop doors, and forsaken bulks.—These assylums of wretchedness, cried Urbanus, are generally stripped of their inhabitants by our upright officers of the night, while the most noted houses of debauchery lying in their walks, are passed by unmolested, though their doors gape on every side for the unwary passenger, like so many whelming gulphs of destruction; at which generally appears some painted whore to allure the purse-proud fool, while others sally out, and range the benighted streets in search of him.

The progress and designs of these ladies are very seldom disturbed by the night watch, nothing is more common than to see them conjunctively retire to the saloop or gin shops, where the former generally pays the price of their mutual intoxication.—As the prostitute preys upon the cull, whose appetite she is to gratify, so does the watchman upon the belated citizen, whose intemperance compells him to fly for defence

fence and assistance to these vigilant preservers of the peripatetic tranquility.——
 When our peripatetics had reached the Strand, they were alarmed by the groans of a person, who lay upon his back, and exhibited a spectacle shocking to the beholder.

It seems he had denied the request of some Irish chairmen, who had solicited a bounteous treat ; but being incensed at his repulse, knocked him down, and treated him with such cruelty, that the poor man soon after expired to the irreparable loss of a disconsolate wife and four helpless children.

The villians escaped detection, and consequently public justice, but we hope so melancholy a circumstance will excite the vigilance of those, to whom is committed the superintendence of these rascals, who unobserved, will not only promote the designs of robbers, but even connive at murder itself.

If the taudry whore and blown up fop are too delicate to sustain the jumble of a coach, and therefore encourage these scoundrels to attend them with their convenient vehicles at all hours, proper stands as well as officers should be appointed

pointed by the legislature, to prevent such scandalous transgressions of the laws of justice, decency, and humanity.

In their farther progress our Spy and his companions were perplexed with the importunate solicitations of many unfortunate woman, who having obtained no money the preceeding night, were debarred a lodging by those inhuman wretches who absolutely exist on their prostitution.

From circumstances of this kind, said Urhanus, I cannot but pity the fate of these unfortunate women, who are not only exposed to the insolence, inhumanity, and extortion of knaves in office; but the more than brutal ingratitude of the infernal minx, or diabolical imp, who are not only accessory to the loss of their virtue, but their continuance in prophaneness and debauchery.

The next extraordinary incident which occurred, was a sedan occupied by a rake, and his whore, the latter was belching within, half undressed, while the former was roaring out bawdy and blasphemy on the roof.

From

From the Jelly house they had repaired to the hospitable Mrs. W——y's and from thence to a neighbouring tavern ; and having in the course of the night perpetrated every act of indcency and beastiality, of which the most fordid can be capable, were now exposing to the world, pictures odious to every rational beholder.

Though, said the Spy, on reflection, one would think that stupid mortal would hate himself ; he will, even when sober glory in the exploit, and arrogate the title of a Good Fellow, from disgracing his very species.—But let us adjourn to a place convenient for a few summary observations.

After a short pause, the sage Urbanus thus began.——My good friend Agrestis, I hope the design of our nocturnal progress will be effectually promoted, by producing a happy tendency both on your principles, and practices.

Though you received a virtuous education in the country, and was under the influence of pious examples, you was not then exposed to the temptations of an alluring town, and consequently are more liable to be trepanned by its devices, and seduced by its enticements.

I have not therefore withheld from your view any scene, that could either excite your love to virtue, or aversion to vice.

I have assumed the monitor ; and endeavoured to make suitable reflections on the different circumstances and characters, which have occurred, as well as shewn their correspondence with, or deviation from the invariable maxims of right and wrong.

I have stripped the mask from the face of hypocrisy, and endeavoured to rescue merit from that oblivion, to which the world would consign it.

The different courses of life, to which you have been witnesses, must convince you of the truth of the remark made by our instructor at the R—e, that few persons are in reality what they pretend to be ; and that dissimulation and hypocrisy generally prevail.

You have seen virtue united with poverty, and infamy with opulence.—

The representations of a wealthy villain must hurt the mind of every ingenuous Englishman, who cannot but revere a man though descended from the dregs of the people, who inherits the soul of a prince ; as well as despise the fellow
who

who boasts the noblest lineage, with the heart of a beggar.

With me, I admonish you to consider mankind equal in the rank of creation ; and though subordination is requisite to the general good of society ; remember no man is worthy the regard of the wise, but him who is intrinsically good. —

In fine, let me entreat you to consider a beneficent disposition, and upright heart as most inestimable, and to cultivate and retain these, in spite of all the events of a transitory life ; remembering the amiable character described by the Poet.

He was a man that lived up to the
standard of his honour,
And prized that jewel more than mines
of Gould.

Agrestis having returned his friend, the sincerest thanks for his admonition, and promised a firm compliance ; after, a mutual farewell, they departed to their respective habitations.

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